

University of Louisville

ThinkIR: The University of Louisville's Institutional Repository

Electronic Theses and Dissertations

5-2006

The unknown struggle : a comparative analysis of women in the Black Power movement.

Elizabeth Michele Jones
University of Louisville

Follow this and additional works at: <https://ir.library.louisville.edu/etd>



Part of the [African American Studies Commons](#), [Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Commons](#), and the [Political History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Jones, Elizabeth Michele, "The unknown struggle : a comparative analysis of women in the Black Power movement." (2006). *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. Paper 712.
<https://doi.org/10.18297/etd/712>

This Master's Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by ThinkIR: The University of Louisville's Institutional Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of ThinkIR: The University of Louisville's Institutional Repository. This title appears here courtesy of the author, who has retained all other copyrights. For more information, please contact thinkir@louisville.edu.

**THE UNKNOWN STRUGGLE:
A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF WOMEN IN THE BLACK
POWER MOVEMENT**

By

**Elizabeth Michele Jones
B.A., University of Louisville, 2004**

**A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate School of the University of Louisville
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of**

Master of Arts

**Department of Pan-African Studies
University of Louisville
Louisville, Kentucky**

May 2006

Copyright 2006 by Elizabeth M. Jones

All rights reserved

**THE UNKNOWN STRUGGLE:
A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF WOMEN IN THE BLACK
POWER MOVEMENT**

By

**Elizabeth Michele Jones
B.A., University of Louisville, 2004**

A Thesis Approved on

April 11, 2006

by the following Thesis Committee

Thesis Director

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my grandmothers

Mrs. Mary T. Fox

and

Mrs. Sadie Jones

two phenomenal women who always stressed the value of education

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to Dr. Theresa Rajack-Talley who has worked tirelessly for the past two years making my dreams come to fruition. I would also like to thank the other committee members Dr. Ricky Jones and Dr. Clarence Talley for their time, efforts, and comments. Finally, I would like to thank the Center for Gender and Development at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine for allowing me to utilize their facilities, research, and transcribed interviews with NJAC women in completing this thesis.

ABSTRACT

THE UNKNOWN STRUGGLE: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF WOMEN IN THE BLACK POWER MOVEMENT

Elizabeth Michele Jones

May 13, 2006

This thesis comparatively analyzes the experiences and roles of women in the United States and Caribbean Black Power Movements. Using the Black Panther Party and Trinidadian National Joint Action Committee as case studies, the researcher isolates similarities and differences among women in these two regions of the African Diaspora. Black Feminist and Caribbean Feminist theoretical perspectives aid in understanding how the interlocking social forces of race, class, and gender impacted women participating in the Black Nationalist movement of the late 1960's and early 1970's.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Dedication.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Abstract.....	v
Chapter	
I. Introduction.....	1
II. Literature Review.....	11
III. Theoretical Perspective	33
IV. Methodology.....	55
V. Findings: Black Panther Party.....	68
VI. Findings: National Joint Action Committee.....	87
VII. Discussions & Conclusions.....	109
VIII. References.....	126
IX. Curriculum Vitae.....	140

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

The streets flood, masses of people discontinue participation in status quo daily activities economically, politically, and socially. The social controls of established mainstream institutions no longer accommodate the massive wave of desires, wants, and needs expressed by collective action. The macroscopic operation of super-structures and relationships of power maintain specific, microscopic implications for the daily lives of people at any particular moment in time. Certain historical ruptures are created through the politicization of the previously apolitical. Identities grounded in experiences of unfairness and injustice, become a foundation upon which social change is built. Disenfranchised people emanating from a multiplicity of cultural, historical, and geographical standpoints participate in the essence of democratic political action.

At the dawn of the twenty-first century, structures of power shaping the globe are being challenged by powerful expressions of collective identity. Social movements arise in response to large-scale factors structural including drastic transformations in the economic system, major population shifts, and social disruption (Taylor, 2000). For mobilization to occur, “at a minimum, people need to feel both aggrieved about some aspect of their lives and optimistic that, acting collectively, they can redress the problem” (McAdam et al., 5). Thomas Abel described the social movement as pluralistic behavior, a collective held together by common goals focused on changing, “established folkways

or institutions” (Abel, 384). Women’s right to vote, Civil Rights legislation, and a shorter workweek represent a small number of alterations created in American government policy by mass action.

Collective behavior and correlated theories represent the dominant social movement research paradigm of the mid-twentieth century. German Nazism captured the central focus of the literature and social movements were subsequently conceived of as spontaneous, unorganized, and unstructured phenomena occurring in the wake of significant social breakdowns (Morris, 2000). Because movements occurred in highly charged contexts characterized by collective excitement and mass enthusiasm, emotions and irrational ideologies became central to their explanation. Participants were viewed solely as reacting to external forces beyond their control (Morris, 2000).

The Civil Rights movement and ensuing movements arising from this particular instance of collective action became major catalysts in shifting the focus of social movement research (Morris, 2000). Political process theory began to formulate how structural inequalities generate collective action and represents the dominant contemporary synthetic paradigm for social movements (McAdam, 1982; Tarrow, 1994; McAdam et al., 1996; Aminzade et. al. forthcoming; Tilly, 1978; Taylor, 2000; Morris, 2000). Political process theorists argue the route by which people mobilize for action occurs through informal networks, pre-existing structures, and formal organizations (Oberschall, 1973; Morris, 2000; Mc Adam, 1982; Morris, 1981, 1984; Snow et. al, 1980). Agency-laden institutions and indigenous grassroots networks, oftentimes of long-standing tradition such as the African-American church, represent vehicles through which organizational and cultural resources are mobilized (Morris, 2000; Taylor, 2000). Social

movement organizations perform critical functions by simultaneously mobilizing and coordinating collective action, as well, as defining the goals and tactics of movements (McCarthy & Zaid, 1977; Gamson, 1975; Morris, 1984; Zaid & Ash, 1966; Morris & Herring, 1987).

Academic literature and historical records surrounding social movements have a propensity to discuss organizations responsible for mobilizing mass political action, with a particular focus on formal leadership positions. When the topic of leadership arises, strong orators with charismatic personality and decision-making power receive the most attention (McNair-Barnett, 1993). The argument follows that leaders attract followers through a combination of on powerful articulations of movement goals and personal magnetism (Morris, 2000). Furthermore, media coverage and its characterization of social movements possess a crucially important role in modern societies (Molotch, 1979; Gamson & Modigliani, 1989; Gamson & Wolfseld 1993; Gitlin 1980). Movement leaders tend to address, within a teleological oriented framework, how this exposure is generated and what image it wishes to convey to the public (Morris, 2000).

Cultural dynamics remain central to the origins and development of social movements; ideas, belief systems, rituals, oratory, and emotions play a central role in the process of mobilization (Morris, 2000). Anthropologists view social movements as arising from a context of “antagonistic acculturation,” in essence a reaction to cultural hegemony (Oppenheimer, 1963). Premeditated and structurally organized conscious efforts by members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture are termed as “revitalization movements” (Oppenheimer, 1963). Due to historical circumstance, African-Americans have long resisted cultural domination and racial discrimination.

Academic literature tends to divide Black social movements into two dichotomous categories: accommodation and nationalism (Oppenheimer, 1963; Cone, 1991). The branch dubbed as nationalist movements are defined by anthropologists as “own-culture oriented,” while movements with an integrationist impetus are deemed “other-culture oriented” (Oppenheimer, 1963). Booker T. Washington and his “Tuskegee Experiment”, as well as, the Civil Rights Movement stand as primary historical examples of the accommodationist/ integrationist ideology. Slave uprisings in the Americas, Marcus Garvey’s globe-sweeping call of “Africa for Africans,” and the Nation of Islam with prominent members Elijah Muhammad and Malcolm X all represent strains of the praxis between Black Nationalist thought and social movement action.

James Cone explains that, Black Nationalists seek as their goal the construction of a society based on African history and culture. The terms “black” and “blackness” represent an ideological posture aligned with the African continent. During times filled with pervasive nihilism, issues of Black ownership of the society and its governing values and culture become a prominent topic of discussion. Black Nationalist movements rise and fall in proportion to the expectations African-descended people maintain for achieving equality in the United States. This strain of thought has tended to speak for the segments of the Black community that was suffering the most (Cone, 1991). The Black Power movement of the late 20th century signifies a prime example of this phenomenon.

Statement of the Problem

Academic literature providing socio-economic and political context to the Black Power era, while focusing on issues of race and class, tends to neglect utilizing gender as

a frame of reference. A large gap exists in the literature, in that, gender and social movements are treated as mutually exclusive categories. Within feminist literature there is a tendency to focus on collective action addressing gender-related issues, especially predominately, white, middle-class women's movements. An extensive literature exists, in the case histories of various women's liberation social movements (Freeman, 1975; Hole & Levine, 1971; Ray, 1998; Rupp & Taylor, 1987; V. Taylor, 1996; Whittier, 1995). Other scholars have explored gender differences from various dimensions of the activist experience including issues of participation, patterns of recruitment, divisions of labor, and feelings about the efficacy of protest (Rochford, 1985; Cable, 1991; Evans, 1980; Fonow, 1998; Irons, 1998; Marullo, 1991; McAdam, 1988; 1992; McNair Barnett, 1993; Robnett, 1997).

In the United States, until recent years, feminist scholarship has focused almost exclusively on the activism of white women. As Audre Lorde states, "There is a pretense to a homogeneity of experience by the word *sisterhood* that does not in fact exist" (Lorde, 285). Feminism as an academic field emerged from predominately college-educated, married, middle- and upper-class, white women. To a large degree, affluent white women with institutional power and academic authority to articulate feminist theory, fail to truly understand the impact of race and class on the lives of poor women of color (hooks, 1995). Caribbean scholar Eudine Barritow Foster writes that, women's activism and political participation results from a negotiation between social norms dictating proper behavior of women and women's reaction to those societal expectations (Foster, 1992). While women share common experiences based on similar societal conceptions of gender, economic and racial forces serve to further nuance these experiences.

Pouring through primary historical records such as newspaper clippings and organizational pamphlets leaves one with the impression that women were not a primary force in the Black Power movement of the late 1960's and early 1970's. The American Black Panther Party and the National Joint Action Committee of Trinidad and Tobago represent two such factions in the Black Power movement ubiquitous in research focusing on the era. The dominant role of formal organizational positions and decision-making power within social movement theory tends to leave women of color, who prefer a more de-centralized, grassroots approach to activism at the margins (McNair Barnett, 1993). The tendency in academic literature is to define social movement leadership through hierarchical structures.

Patricia Hill-Collins argues that, "social science research has ignored Black women's actions in both the struggle for group survival and institutional transformation" (Hill-Collins, 140). Specifically discussing Black Power in Trinidad and Tobago, Victoria Pasley writes that while the specific events of the movement have been sufficiently added to the annals of historical literature, this area of scholarship still fails to significantly address the question of gender and women's experiences within the movement (Pasley, 2001). As a result, Black women have long contributed to the Black Nationalist strain of social movements their participation and work in sustaining the community lingers near invisible. Black women remain as a constant force in setting the pace for change; Amy Jacques Garvey, Diane Nash, Nanny of the Jamaican Maroons, and Ida B. Wells are a few of the many names in the extensive list of Black women that have fought in the struggle for freedom, justice, and equality. The Black Panther Party in the United States and the National Joint Action Committee in Trinidad and Tobago,

encompass specific cases in which Black women's activism continues to be little known and understood.

The Black Panther Party conjures up images traditionally associated with dominant conceptions of masculinity such as assault rifles, black leather, hard stares, and confrontational, aggressive politics. Yet, prominent member Kathleen Cleaver once astutely posed the question, "where did the dominant image of the Black Panther come from" (Abu-Jamal, 160). The same media forces that propagandized Martin Luther King Jr. and other Black male ministers as comprising the entirety of forces at work during the Civil Rights Movement also played a role in creating mainstream notions of the Black Panther Party. Despite conceptions of the Party as a male organization, one year following the Party's creation estimates places the membership of women at approximately 60% (Abu-Jamal, 2004). Among the abundance of literature regarding Panther men such as Eldridge Cleaver, Bobby Seals, and Huey P. Newton, the question remains: where are the women?

Women's involvement with the National Joint Action Committee during the Black Power movement of Trinidad and Tobago is equally invisible. Despite the fact women participated in mass marches and demonstrations organized by NJAC during the revolution in 1970, their activism and particular roles within the movement remains largely unrecognized. Women played critical roles in NJAC through handing out pamphlets, holding community level discussions debating the meaning of Black Power, and speaking on platforms during mass meetings (Pasley, 2001).

Research Approach

The current thesis topic seeks to fill gaps in social movement literature, particularly surrounding Black Nationalist collective action, as well as, feminist scholarship on gender within the context of social movements. Analyzing the experiences and roles of women in social movements allows the researcher to explore whether or not women would build the same types of social movement organizations and if they would make the same decisions based on experiences of gender. In patriarchal societies, men oftentimes fill positions within the hierarchy of formal social movement leadership (Robnett, 1997; Taylor, 1999). Understanding how race, class, and gender operate simultaneously to affect Black women's experiences and roles within social movements remains an understudied phenomenon. This research will contribute to a greater comprehension of how interlocking social forces affect the way in which women resist oppression in different regions of the Diaspora.

The specific research objective of this thesis is to compare women's experiences in the Black Nationalist movement of the 1960's and 1970's in the United States and Caribbean using the American Black Panther Party and Trinidadian National Joint Action Committee as case studies. A greater understanding of similarities and differences of women's experiences, roles, and concerns within the Black Power movement are to be derived from comparing the two organizations through responses to the following research questions:

1. What motivated women to become involved with the Black Nationalist organizations?
2. What types of positions did women maintain within the organizational hierarchy?

3. With what activities were women in the Black Panther Party and National Joint Action Committee involved?
4. Did the women encounter sexism and how did they respond?
5. Were there recognizable gender concerns and roles that women maintained within the context of the Black Power movement?

Structure of Thesis

Chapter 2 is a literature review of social movements, specifically focusing on Black Nationalist ideology and prominent Black Nationalist organizations. This section provides socio-economic and historical context to the Black Power era, from which the Black Panther Party and National Joint Action Committee came to fruition. Archival data and prior academic literature allow the researcher to position the organization's goals, ideologies, programs, and actions within the context of the larger Black Power movement.

Black Feminist perspectives including that of a Caribbean Feminist theoretical perspective are discussed in Chapter 3. The birth of contemporary Black and Caribbean Feminist thought situates itself within the Black Power movement of the late 1960's and early 1970's. For example, Ula Taylor writes in "The Historical Evolution of Black Feminist Theory and Praxis" (1998) that, "the rising sexism in the Black Power movement compelled many African American women to move from individually holding culprits accountable to collective activism against chauvinism" (Taylor, 244). Similarly, Caribbean feminist scholar Mohammed (1990) argues that growing alongside an emergent class- consciousness and racial awareness, the Caribbean feminist perspective

reflects an analysis based on recognizing the interlocking forces of race, class, and gender.

A description of the methodological approach to the research follows in chapter 4. This section discusses the operationalization of the comparative study in order to achieve the research objective of understanding women's experiences and roles in Black Nationalist organizations in the Caribbean and United States. Comparative research allows for systematic and contextualized comparisons between similar and different cases (Mahoney & Rueschemeyer, 2003). The data source will be published autobiographies and recorded interviews; a qualitative data set is utilized in order to construct a gendered analysis of the two organizations.

Chapter 5 provides background to the Black Panther Party and reviews its ideological platform, as well as, activities. Following a description of the organization, the researcher presents findings on Black women's experiences and roles organized around the research questions. Chapter 6 follows a similar format and begins with an in-depth account of the National Joint Action Committee then moves into findings surrounding women's experiences and roles within the organization.

The thesis concludes with Chapter 7, entitled Discussions and Conclusions. This section reviews the experiences and roles of women within both Black Power organizations by tying them to a theoretical base. The chapter will focus specifically on the similarities and differences between African-descended women in the Black Panther Party and National Joint Action Committee.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Movements

Social movements exist on a continuum between spontaneous, unorganized developments in a society on one end and established, stable organizations lacking the ability to instantaneously react to member demands on the other (Freeman & Johnson, 1999). Integral components defining a social movement include an ideological platform, broad-scale consciousness-raising, a degree of spontaneity, and the existence of core organizations functioning to mobilize support. In a social movement, one or more primary organizations operate in providing structure to the actions of an otherwise unstructured mass. Furthermore, highly developed movements embody their message in an elaborate philosophy that prescribes solutions, articulates problems, and provides strategies and tactics (Freeman & Johnson, 1999). Taken together, these phenomena contribute to an understanding of social movements known as political process theory.

Social movement mobilization holds tremendous connections with the ideological message promoting mass-action. People and participants must feel attached to the professed ideas, goals, and tactics espoused by specific organizations and leaders. Frame-alignment theory argues the main cultural task for a social movement organizer is to develop and articulate an ideology aligned with the pre-existing belief system of those whom they wish to mobilize (Morris, 2003). The proposed strategies and tactics of a

movement must be tied to both the core organizations and the chosen cultural frame used to create widespread consciousness-raising. Provided solutions and tactics represent one of the central factors in movement causation and allow the process of mobilization to move at a rapid pace (Morris, 1981).

Black Nationalism represents an ideology producing social movements since the late 18th century and around which core organizations providing social movement leadership have grown. As discussed in Chapter 1 Black Nationalist movements rise and fall in proportion to the expectations African-descended people maintain for achieving equality. This strain of thought tends to speak for segments of the Black community greatly suffering from issues of poverty and racial discrimination (Cone, 1991). This section begins by briefly defining Black Nationalism and then surveys prominent Black Nationalist organizations. It then moves into a discussion of the Black Power era during the late 20th century located in both the United States and Caribbean.

Black Nationalism

Nationalist movements arise from a context of what anthropologists term antagonistic acculturation. They believe the ethnic, religious, or linguistic group to which they are most intimately attached is undervalued and oppressed by outsiders. As an own-culture oriented movement, Nationalists view themselves as being differentiated and separated from competing social and ethnic groups (VanDeburg, 1997). Whether expressed in terms of territorial cession, political empowerment, or increased cultural autonomy, Nationalists seek to strengthen in-group values while rejecting those of the dominant society (VanDeburg, 1997).

During historical eras characterized by pervasive nihilism, issues of Black ownership of the society and its governing cultural values become a prominent topic of discussion (Cone, 1991). Black Nationalism represents a transformative philosophy seeking to remove white-dominated structures of society affecting the lives of Black people politically, socially, economically, and culturally. It addresses the primary issues of cultural regeneration for African-descended people, ownership of economic production, and autonomy over the political affairs of Black people (VanDeburg, 1997). Black Nationalists seek as their goal the construction of a society based on African history and culture. The terms “black” and “blackness” represent an ideological posture aligned with the African continent (Cone, 1991).

There are two main branches of Black Nationalism: Classical Black Nationalism and Modern Black Nationalism. Classical Black Nationalism maintains the goal of creating an autonomous black nation-state with definite geographical boundaries, usually located in Africa. This manifestation of the ideology originated during the Revolutionary War, peaked during the 1850’s, declined in the post-Civil War era, and reemerged during the 1920’s with Marcus Garvey and the United Negro Improvement Association (Moses, 1996). On the contrary, Modern Black Nationalists do not advocate emigration or the creation of a Black nation-state, but seek to develop unity among peoples of African descent throughout the globe (Moses, 1996). Malcolm X represents a prominent figure ascribing to this expression of Black Nationalism, which may alternatively be referred to as Pan-Africanism. The most prominent Black Nationalist organizations in recent history, preceding those created during the late 20th century Black Power movement, are the Universal Negro Improvement Association and the Nation of Islam.

Marcus Garvey & the Universal Negro Improvement Association

From the post-World War I period until the deportation of its leader in 1927, the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) represented the most powerful and wide-sweeping expression of Black Nationalism in action (McCartney, 1992). Marcus Mosiah Garvey immigrated to the United States in 1916 and within a year Harlem, New York had become the epicenter of UNIA activism. By mid-1920, the Black Nationalist organization claimed over a thousand branch chapters globally (VanDeburg, 1997). In 1920, the UNIA-sponsored International Convention of the Negro Peoples of the World attracted 25,000 delegates from over twenty-five different countries to New York's Madison Square Garden (McCartney, 1992).

In the vein of Classical Nationalism, Garvey's organization advocated the creation of an independent black nation-state located in Africa. He believed that blacks, living in predominately white countries, were forced to adapt to the needs and aspirations of others and could never realize their highest ambitions. Through emigration, Garvey argued African-descended people would become self-sufficient and be able set priorities based on their own needs (McCartney, 1992). To a black American population living in the post-Reconstruction era, suffering from the vicious cycle of poverty, violence, and despair, the promise of a future in an independent Africa was alluring (Adeleke, 1998).

Garvey was a steadfast advocate of separatism between the races and espoused Black Nationalism as the only solution to the great race problem. According to Garvey there existed the impending danger of a race war, which would engulf all mankind. "Apportioning every race to its own habitat," represented the only preventative measure to a racially-based global conflict (Garvey, 405). As a Pan-Africanist, Garvey rejected

any difference between native Africans and blacks living in America and the West Indies (Williams, 1984).

The UNIA represented one of the most wide-sweeping manifestations of Black Nationalism in practice, as evidenced by the multitude of economic, educational, and cultural programs the organization sponsored. As economic nationalists the UNIA established a cooperative network of grocery stores, laundries and restaurants, as well as, a black doll factory, printing plant, and fleet of moving vans. The Black Starline Steamship Corporation was established for emigration back to Africa (VanDeburg, 1997; McCartney, 1992). In the vein of an African-centered education, the UNIA sponsored elementary schools and classes at New York's Booker T. Washington University and Liberty University in Claremont, Virginia. Members received instruction through UNIA auxiliaries including the Universal African Black Cross Nurses and the Juvenile Black Cross Nurses (VanDeburg, 1997). Cultural Nationalists celebrated their blackness by attending concerts, dances, and plays at one of the organization's Liberty Hall auditoriums. Garveyite papers including the Negro World and the Daily Negro Times published race-conscious historical and poetic works (VanDeburg, 1997).

Elijah Muhammad, Malcolm X, & the Nation of Islam

From an organizational standpoint, the Nation of Islam (NOI) represented the chief benefactor to the American Black Power movement arising during the mid 1960s, especially in terms of cultural renewal (Ogbar, 2004). Haywood Burns maintained that the Nation of Islam maintained "the greatest impact on the Northern Black urban ghetto dweller of any movement since Garvey" (Balagoon, xiii). Writing in 1961, Dr. Eric C.

Lincoln proclaimed that, “The Black Muslims are probably America’s foremost Black nationalist movement...Exactly how many Black Muslims there are is unknown, but in December 1960, there were sixty-nine temples in twenty-seven states from California to Massachusetts” (Lincoln, 2).

A profile of the Nation of Islam revealed a few common traits among its members. In a survey taken in Detroit during the early years of the movement (1930-1934), it showed that the overwhelming majority of Muslims, all but half a dozen or so of the two hundred families interviewed, were recent migrants from the rural South and came from small communities in Virginia, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi (Lincoln, 1994). The membership was also predominately young. Up to 80% of the typical congregation was between the ages of seventeen to thirty-five. Furthermore, unlike the typical Christian church where women comprise the majority, Black Muslim temples attracted many more men than women and men assumed the full management of temple affairs. Although women worked alongside men in various business enterprises and shared in temple affairs, their positions never conflicted with the male assumption of primary responsibility (Lincoln, 1994).

NOI membership was also essentially lower class. At the time of their first associations with Muhammad, practically all of the members of the Nation of Islam were recipients of public welfare, unemployed, and living in the most deteriorated areas of Detroit. The time, the early 1930’s, also represented the worst of the Depression years (Lincoln, 1994). Yet, by 1937 it was observed that, “There is no known case of unemployment among these people. Practically all of them are working in the automobile

and other factories. They live no longer in the slum section... but rent homes in some of the best economic areas in which Negroes have settled” (Lincoln, 1994).

Many Muslims came into the movement from various levels of extralegal activity, some being ex-convicts and convicts. Temples were furthermore established within the confines of prison walls. Some members came into the movement as drug addicts and alcoholics, or were retired pimps, prostitutes, pool sharks, and gamblers. Yet, all who remained in the movement were rehabilitated and put to work. NOI members’ claimed that they were able to secure work much more easily than other ghetto blacks. Idleness and laziness was rejected by Muslims and delinquency, whether juvenile or otherwise, was almost unheard of in NOI ranks (Lincoln, 1994). Muslim leaders tended to live and to build their temples and businesses in the areas where they drew their major support, the heart of the black ghetto (Lincon, 1994).

In terms of ideology, the NOI argued that African-Americans celebrated a slave culture of self-destruction and violence (Ogbar, 2004). Elijah Muhammad understood the importance of myths and stories to a people’s psyche, he felt that 400 years of brutal enslavement and oppression robbed African-Americans of their knowledge of self and it was therefore necessary to construct a new identity for blacks. Through the incorporation of fables and his unique interpretation of the Holy Koran, Muhammad created a new Black-Islamic framework for viewing the world. The “Myth of Yacub,” created by Muhammad, signified a radical and imaginative interpretation of black identity that established black superiority over whites (Curtis, 2002).

Similar to Garvey, separation from whites remained central to the teachings of Elijah Muhammad’s organization and the doors of the movement were open only to

Blacks. Elijah Muhammad rejected Martin Luther King Jr.'s vision of an unequal and integrated America, arguing that King attempted to make Blacks love the white devil, a self-defeating act that perpetuated the values of slavery (Curtis, 2002). While it did not advocate emigration to Africa, as had the UNIA, the NOI did call for territorial cession. The Nation of Islam's Muslim Program was a 12-point statement calling for justice and freedom for Black people. Number four of the program stated, "We want our people in America whose parents or grandparents were descendants from slaves, to be allowed to establish a separate state or territory of their own....either on this continent or elsewhere."

Malcolm X represented the spark to the Nation of Islam's flaming success in turning thousands of hardened criminals, dope addicts, and prostitutes into functioning citizens with knowledge of self. While imprisoned in the Concord Reformatory in 1947, Philbert and Reginald Little encouraged their brother, later renamed Malcolm X, to learn about the teachings of the Honorable Elijah Muhammad. The conversion of Malcolm into a member of the NOI took place over a period of months and after his parole in 1952, Malcolm X immediately began his meteoric rise through the ranks of the NOI establishing temples nationwide (Curtis, 2002).

Interestingly enough, Malcolm was the son of Louise, a Caribbean immigrant from Grenada who wrote for the United Negro Improvement Associations *Negro World*. Her husband, Earl, was also a committed Garveyite who organized UNIA activities in Omaha, Nebraska and East Lansing, Michigan where the family had moved by the late 1920's (Vandeburg, 1997). Due to his family background, it becomes apparent that Malcolm X was familiar with the Black Nationalist thought of Marcus Garvey. On the

levels of a common Pan-African black identity and the creation of a black nation-state, Malcolm X's philosophical thought reflects the influence of the UNIA leader.

In a letter written while in Accra, Ghana, as an official guest of Kwame Nkrumah's newly independent government, Malcolm wrote, "It is time for all African-Americans to become an integral part of the world's Pan-Africanists" (Curtis, 98). Unlike Garvey, Malcolm did not believe emigration to be the sole solution to the problems of Black-Americans. Malcolm espoused Pan-Africanism as a cultural and philosophical return to Africa, as well as, political and economic unity with its states (Curtis, 2002).

Malcolm X furthermore adopted Garvey's notion of Black unity and togetherness and espoused the tenants of what would later be termed "Black Power." Malcolm advocated for Blacks to take power and control their own black communities socially, politically, and economically. Politically, he philosophized that Black people must control the politics and politicians of their community. Economically, he asserted, "The economic philosophy of Black nationalism means that we should control the economy of our community. Why should white people be running the stores of our community" (Harper, 392).

American Black Power (Late 1960's & Early 1970's)

As had other Black Nationalist movements including the UNIA and NOI, the Black Power movement of the late 20th century represents a particular moment at which faith in the improvement of white America's treatment of blacks was diminished. Issues of poverty and class were very much engrained in public discourse due to the evolving Civil Rights movement and the Democratic Party's efforts to consolidate its urban

political base (Boger, 1996). Urban unrest and rampant unemployment focused on America's predominately black inner-cities through the north, mid-west, and west.

In the mid-1960's, America's inner cities erupted into a violent spell of racial unrest for five consecutive "long hot summers"(Boger, 1996). Nationwide, from Watts to Detroit, predominately young, unemployed African-Americans looted, firebombed, and wrecked businesses generating billions of dollars in insurance claims (Woods, 2005). Responding to the tumultuous riots, former general consul to the NAACP Robert Carter stated, "the new problem is urban centers in the north" (Rainwater & Yancey, 1967). Unrest in America's inner cities lingered as proof that legislation could not fully redress the residual effects of slavery and segregation. The riots followed a decade of white violence targeting Southern Blacks who dared to challenge the system of Jim Crow (Boger, 1996). The effective dismantling of legal racism begun ten years earlier, initiated by the 1954 Brown vs. Board decision. Yet, as Rainwater & Yancey (1967) argue, de facto segregation and covert racism remained tied to the institutions and social order of the United States.

A history of profound changes in residential patterns and economic organization exacerbated existing racial segregation and fueled unrest in American society during the late 1960's. The migration of Blacks from southern states to the inner cities of the north, west, and mid-west began following emancipation from slavery. The movement of African-Americans out of the South represents the largest mass migration of the 20th century; by 1930 over two million had traveled to northern cities. Leaving behind a life of constant debt brought about by the system of sharecropping, blacks in the north filled positions in factories and domestic service (Takaki, 1995). During the post-WWII era,

economic shifts ushered in by the Bretton Woods Conference, accelerated residential segregation and aggravated employment opportunities for blacks (Boger, 1996).

Between 1950 and 1966 ninety-eight percent of black population growth occurred in central cities. Within the same time frame, the vast majority of white population growth took place in the suburbs (Rainwater & Yancey, 1967). Karen Broadkin Sacks (1998) attributes this phenomenon to the discriminatory practices of the Federal Housing Administration (FHA). In her own words she explains:

“The FHA believed in racial segregation. Throughout its history, it publicly and actively promoted restrictive covenants....With the federal government behind them, virtually all developers refused to sell to African Americans.....Segregation kept them [African-Americans] out of the suburbs and redlining made sure they could not buy or repair their homes in the neighborhoods in which they were allowed to live.” (Broadkin, 109)

As a result of racially discriminatory practices, the trend known as “suburbanization” was restricted to predominately whites. Combined with the simultaneous process of “deindustrialization” a spatial-mismatch arose between location and jobs, effectively leaving blacks stranded in inner cities without access to employment. African-Americans disproportionately experienced the impact of deindustrialization’s effects and suffered enormously from the massive job losses produced by plant closings in central cities (Bluestone & Harrison, 1982). The relocation of factories left a large majority of blacks without the financial means or the transportation to access employment (Woods, 2005). A mis-match between jobs and location significantly affected black laborers during this era (Boger, 1996). Unemployment gaps between the races widened and more black unemployment existed in 1964 compared with 1954 (Rainwater & Yancey, 1967).

Unemployment and underemployment embodied the single most important source of poverty among blacks and was the principle cause of family and social disorganization in communities (Boger, 1996). Concentrated poverty and deflating tax bases brought with them the correlated social-ills of high crime rates, exploitative retail service, inadequate health care, and substandard education. Excluded from white residential areas and suffering from overpriced rental rates, many African-Americans, “lived in ghettos created by political and economic institutions controlled by whites and rooted in prejudice” (Woods, 250).

The interrelated effects of economic shifts and residential segregation beginning post-WWII set the stage for urban unrest manifesting itself in the late 1960’s. In the wake of the turmoil, President Lyndon B. Johnson issued an Executive Order to create the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders. The subsequent Kerner Commission Report cautioned, “discrimination and segregation have long permeated much of American life....now they threaten every American” (Boger, 8). Out of this specific socio-historical context arises the Black Nationalist movement known as “Black Power.”

The year 1966 marks the definitive moment at which Black Power became part of the national discourse. Stokely Carmichael, a native Trinidadian and newly-elected Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) president, capitalized on the phrase at a Greenwood, Mississippi protest during the summer of 1966 (Woods, 2005). The Civil Rights movement began to lose momentum without substantially improving the economic, social, and political situation of the average African-American. Whereas the Civil Rights Movement had been a primarily southern phenomenon comprised of middle-class African Americans, the Black Power movement encompassed an axiological shift

towards the sentiments of poor, young, blacks living in the urban north. (Abu-Jamal, 2004).

SNCC leaders including Carmichael, James Forman, and Courtland Cox brought to the political arena an ideological position grounded in the philosophies of Frantz Fanon, Kwame Nkrumah, Malcolm X, Marcus Garvey, and George Padmore. A combination of which represents a strain of Black Nationalist thought, highly influenced by issues of class and race, spanning Africa and its Diaspora. The researcher argues that the global scale of the Black Power movement may have partly resulted from events taking place earlier in the 20th century including Pan-African Congresses organized by W.E.B. DuBois, the Negritude movement originating at the Sorbonne in France, and the world-wide scope of Marcus Garvey's United Negro Improvement Association.

Although there were a prolific number of ideological influences on Black Power, the attention of young radicals was especially drawn to the newly translated work of psychologist Frantz Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth (Brisbane, 1974; Ogbar, 2004; Woods, 2005; Smith, 1999). Fanon identified America as a Western imperialist oppressor and related the experience of American Blacks to that of other colonized Blacks throughout the Diaspora. Fanon had been the protégé of fellow Martiniquan Aime Césaire, a proponent of Negritude who studied at the Sorbonne in Paris with existentialist philosopher Jean Paul Sartre and African decolonization leaders Joseph Nyere, and Leopold Senghor. The Wretched of the Earth argues that the process of colonization is inherently violent and a violent response to the systematic exploitation of Black people is justified. Furthermore, Fanon explains that the cultural systems of African-descended people should be regenerated as they had been replaced with European values during

slavery and colonization (Fanon, 1967). His advocacy stood in direct opposition to the non-violent, integrationist tactics of the Civil Rights Movement

The Black Power movement of the 1970's mirrored previous Black Nationalist movements in its drive to construct a positive identity for Blackness. From the myth of Yacub created by Muhammad, to Malcolm's mission of alleviating the brainwashing experienced by American Blacks, to Garvey's cries of "up you mighty race," Black Nationalist thought has always sought the cultural regeneration of Black people (Ogbar, 93). In their work Black Power: The Politics of Liberation (1992), Stokely Carmichael and Charles V. Hamilton wrote that:

"Our basic need is to reclaim our history and identity from what must be called cultural terrorism.....We shall have to struggle for the right to create our own terms through which to define ourselves and our relationship to the society and to have those terms recognized." (Carmichael & Hamilton, 33-34)

In rejection of European standards of beauty, African-Americans began straightening their hair and adopted the natural Afro hairstyle. Black authors published books, short stories, and poems exploring and extolling African heritage (Woods, 2005). To facilitate cultural rebirth Maluana Karenga's organization US advocated the adoption of African names, clothes, rituals, and values (Ogbar, 2004). Poets such as Sonia Sanchez and Haki Madhubuit redefined the term Black from its negative connotations to positive representations of "black is beautiful" (Jennings, 1988). In analyzing African-American expressive culture of the era Kimberly Bentson argues that blackness emerged "as a term of multiple, often conflicting, implications which, taken together, signal black America's effort to articulate its own conditions of possibility"(Bentson, 2000).

In the mid-1960's the term "soul" became synonymous with blackness and reflected the omnipresent mood of resistance and self-determination present during the Black Power era (Ogbar, 2004). The Last Poets utilized rhythmic poetry over drumbeats and Black musicians employed art as a vehicle for political protest. Marvin Gaye's "What's Going On," the Chi-Lites "For God's Sake Give More Power to the People," and The Impressions "We're a Winner," replicated the sentiments of young, urban, African-Americans (Ogbar, 2004). By the late 1960's, the Black Power movement held strong influence over black popular culture, especially among the young. "Black is beautiful" had become a rallying cry and African attire had become mainstream being featured in the pages of Black women's magazines such as *Ebony* and *Fashion Fair* (Ogbar, 2004).

Blacks sought autonomy not only in terms of cultural self-definitions but, also in the political and economic realm. The movement maintained an analysis of society based on the inter-locking forces of race and class. It sought to alter both the systematic racism of institutions and the exploitative nature of capitalist economic organization, which fueled urban unrest and angst. On July 31, 1966, the National Committee of Negro Churchmen issued a statement on Black Power that emphasized blacks mobilizing their resources for political and economic power (Mithun, 1977). Likewise, Carmichael and Hamilton (1992) claimed American blacks lived in colonial conditions comparable to that of blacks in Africa and the Caribbean. Politically, the voting strength of African-Americans had been subdued through de facto means of disenfranchisement and was consistently diluted by the processes of gerrymandering. Rampant unemployment of the era, as well as, disproportionate wages paid to white and black workers stood as a primary concern for Black Power leaders (Carmichael & Hamilton, 1992). The different

Black Power organizations arising from this era maintained various approaches and solutions to the issue of political and economic power in Black America. Chapter 5 addresses in-depth the tactics and strategies advocated by the Black Panther Party.

Caribbean Black Power

The late 20th century Black Power movement in the United States and Caribbean paralleled one another in terms of structural conditions creating the movement, ideological impetus, and prominent theoreticians. In the Caribbean there existed slavery, emancipation, and racial discrimination analogous to the U.S., albeit under different circumstances due to a Black majority in the West Indies (Lowenthal, 1972). The system of colonialism following emancipation from slavery prevented Caribbean blacks from governing their own affairs socially, politically, and economically (Rodney, 1969). In the colonial economic system the Caribbean region remained subordinate to European metropolises and foreign trade maintained pre-eminence over domestic needs. West Indian islands produced and marketed raw materials, agricultural goods, and provided tourist facilities controlled by and for the benefit of metropolitan powers (Lowenthal, 1972; Rodney, 1969).

The invasive atmosphere of nihilism among blacks in the Caribbean mirrored the state of African-descended people living in America. Independence movements failed to alleviate the deplorable social condition of West Indian blacks, as had the Civil Rights movement in America. Furthermore, the de-industrialization occurring in the United States led to a relocation of multinational corporations into the Caribbean region of the world without creating sources of employment paying decent wages to local populations.

Profound economic shifts contributed to job inequality, income imbalance, and racial discrimination, all of which were attributed to Western imperialism (Riviere, 1972). West Indian blacks played little part in economic decision-making and owned few local resources besides their labor that tended to be exploited through low-wages and harsh work conditions (Lowenthal, 1972).

In Trinidad and Tobago specifically, post-World War II inflation served to worsen the lot of the already struggling masses (Lux, 1972). Following independence, the reigning political party the Peoples National Movement, led by Prime Minister Eric Williams, continued to maintain economic ties with Western powers and did little to redress the historical imbalance persisting from the era of slavery. The Trinidadian government pursued a policy of “Industrialization by Invitation” and promised better social services, as well as, new sources of employment for the country (Gosine, 1986). Various forms of subsidies were implemented to attract foreign investment in hopes that job opportunities for local laborers would be created. Despite large tax concessions granted to multinational corporations, locals received few jobs in return. Additionally, the primary industry of oil, as well as, agricultural production declined drastically (Gosine, 1986).

As a result of these economic changes, similar to the United States, unemployment and underemployment among black people, especially the youth, steadily increased. Unemployment rates in Trinidad skyrocketed from 6% in 1956 to an astounding 33% by 1968. Unemployment among youth loomed at 31% for those aged 15-19 and was anywhere between 20-25% for those aged 20-24 (Millette, 1995). Furthermore, wage gaps among different racial groups persisted with the monthly median

income being 555 TT dollars for whites, 104 TT dollars for Afro-Trinidadians, and 77 TT dollars for Indo-Trinidadians. In general, females received 60% the income of males and in the service industry specifically, women were paid wages less than 50% of their male counterparts (Gosine, 1986). Increased unemployment combined with an increase in the country's imported food-bill due to dependency on more expensive foreign markets caused tensions throughout the country (Riviere, 1972).

As mentioned of the American Black Power era, blacks "lived in ghettos created by political and economic institutions controlled by whites and rooted in prejudice" (Woods, 250). In Trinidad 45% of African-descended people lived in grossly overcrowded conditions and 66% of dwellings were described as being in fair to poor condition (Riviere, 1972). Young blacks lived in dire conditions of unemployment, underemployment, poor housing, and malnourishment, while the majority of whites and coloreds comprised a privileged class (Ryan, 1995). For these youth, the relationship between the post-independence neocolonial regime and the devastation of the economy was clear (Riddell & Thomas, 1971).

Sparked by similar structural conditions, the urban unrest seen in American streets manifested itself in the Caribbean beginning in 1968 and lasted through 1970. Massive strikes and street demonstrations in the name of Black Power shook the streets of Curacao, Bermuda, Bahamas, Jamaica, Aruba, Anguilla, and Trinidad and Tobago. (Ryan, 1995) According to William Lux (1972), "Black Power is a movement of international dimensions which results from the affinity that Black people in disparate parts of the world feel for each other" (Lux, 218).

The Black Power movement in the British Caribbean received a great degree of its impetus from Black protest occurring in the United States including the Civil Rights Movement (Oxaal, 1971). American soul music including Otis Redding, Sly and the Family Stone, and the Temptations, made its way into the African Diaspora, and the “sounds of blackness” helped politicize young people of the Caribbean. The literature of Stokely Carmichael, Malcolm X, H. Rap Brown, Frantz Fanon, the Black Panther Party, and the Nation of Islam became widespread throughout the region (“Soul”, 1970).

However, it must be recognized that the Black Power movement in the Caribbean was not directly imported from the United States. During this era there was a great deal of movement among African-descended people and exchange of ideas globally. Stokely Carmichael was a native Trinidadian, Franz Fanon was born in Martinique, and Malcolm X’s mother hailed from the Caribbean while both of his parents were involved with Jamaican born Marcus Garvey’s UNIA. Brought about by the Pan-African Congresses, the migration of Caribbean workers in search of employment, and black students studying abroad there existed great movement among African-descended people throughout the Diaspora and on the African continent. This created the possibility for ideologies being transmitted and discussions regarding the similar state of African-descended people on a global scale.

In 1968, Walter Rodney began preaching Black Power to the Caribbean masses and is the primary figure responsible for the rise of the Black Power movement in the region (Riviere, 1972; Gosine, 1986; Thomas, 1992). Rodney defined the primary goals of Black Power as breaking from white racist imperialism, black ownership of the Caribbean region, and cultural regeneration for African-descended people (Rodney,

1969). According to Rodney, the independence movement failed to achieve power for Black people. He writes, “A Black man ruling a dependent state within the imperialist system has no power. He is simply an agent of the whites in the metropolis, with an army and police force designed the imperialist way of things” (Rodney, 18). Ironically, the Caribbean manifestation of Black Power revolted, rioted, and boycotted against Black governments and leaders. As William Lux (1972) explained, Black Power resisted the “Afro-Saxons,” the successors of the colonizers and sought to destroy the colonial system established European powers (Lux, 215).

Black Power symbolized the revival of traditional African culture, which was deemed as vital to freeing West Indian blacks from the painful inner crisis created by a history of slavery (Gosine, 1986). The drive for cultural regeneration during the Black Power movement maintained roots in the Negritude movement, beginning in the early 1930s. The philosophical thought of Senegalese Leopold Senghor and Martiniquan Aime Cesaire sparked the Caribbean-wide production of literature extolling a positive concept of blackness and African heritage. Lowenthal (1972) wrote Black Power “seeks to eradicate the effects of colonial emulation, in part by engendering pride in African heritage” (Lowenthal, 117) Dress and hairstyle became a means of contesting Western values and standards of beauty. Young Afro- and Indo-Trinidadians donned traditional attire and natural hair to show identification with Africa and India as opposed to Europe (Pasley, 2001). The Trinidadian Carnival, a nation-wide celebration of music, dancing, and masquerading, during 1969 exemplified the growing consciousness of the Black Power era. Mighty Duke, won the calypso crown singing “Black is Beautiful,” and young

people donned red, black, and green rather than participating in traditionalized mas ("Soul", 1970).

Similar to the American Black Power movement, the Caribbean manifestation of Black Nationalism maintained both an economic and racial dimension. A pamphlet entitled "Black Sound" published at the University of West Indies, St. Augustine in Trinidad and Tobago read, "we have to combine the two enemies of the Black Man in our struggle for they are committed to denying us our freedom. We must understand how they are related and how they enslave us" ("Talking About Black Power", 1970). Lowenthal (1972) provides the link between cultural denigration and economic subjugation, "cultural emulation reinforces the economics of race....to be black is not simply to be generally poor but to be despised, and to despise oneself" (Lowenthal, 117).

Black Power maintained an economic nationalist foundation. The movement sought to regain control of the country's resources and economy. Black Power rebelled against the economic underdevelopment of the Caribbean resulting from the residual effects of enslavement (Lux, 1972). The economic model purporting to engineer economic transformation failed to satisfy the basic needs of West Indian blacks and remove them from perennial dependence. Black Power called for the immediate destruction of all inherited institutions to be replaced with genuinely Caribbean structures (Thomas, 1992).

However, the Caribbean was without a definitive cultural base to which it could build institutions. One primary differentiation between American Black Power and Caribbean Black Power derives from the multi-cultural nature of Caribbean societies. Scholar Patricia Muhammed (1990) explains, "The Caribbean appears more as a political

space rather than a geographic entity...The demographic distribution of races and ethnic groups brought together from east and west varies by territory and has led to different political tensions founded on race or class/color” (Muhammed, 11). The multiracial composition of the Caribbean placed severe restrictions on Black Power as a guide for action (Thomas, 1995). In no West Indian society do nonwhites comprise a “unified” Black community, there range colors along a light-dark continuum, in addition to East Indians, Chinese, and other ethnic minorities (Lowenthal, 1972). In Trinidad between 1845 and 1917, there existed a system of Indian indentured labor (Muhammed, 1990). Walter Rodney emphasized that the limitation of color analysis in the Caribbean and advised Caribbean Blacks not to determine the position of ethnic and racial groups, but allow those groups to determine for themselves participation in Black Power (Rodney, 1969).

CHAPTER III

FEMINIST THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

The term feminism corresponds to both social movements and a broad academic field with multiple branches influenced by diverse political, social, and economic ideologies. In its broadest definition, a feminist theoretical approach systematically organizes and provides meaning to the myriad roles and experiences of women within the context of historical memory and contemporary social relations. Placing women at its methodological center, feminist thought constructs knowledge claims based on the ways in which gender shapes women's realities. It addresses a range of issues affecting women's lives. This chapter articulates four major themes in feminist literature: labor, motherhood, womanhood, and activism. It provides a review of these specific topics from both a Black Feminist and Caribbean Feminist perspective by juxtaposing them with Liberal Feminism.

The strains of Black Feminism and Caribbean Feminism that arose during the Black Power era represent the praxis between academic theorizing and social movement action. Ula Taylor argued sexism present in the American Black Power movement spurred a Black Feminist Consciousness among movement participants (Taylor, 1998a). These individual strands of feminist thought represent a response to the inadequacies of Liberal Feminism and second wave women's movements to account for the experiences of poor women and women of color. Its theoreticians rejected the notion of a common

sisterhood among all women based solely on sexism and incorporated a recognition of race and class forces in their theoretical perspective.

Liberal Feminism

Betty Friedan revealed “the problem that has no name,” in her pivotal work The Feminist Mystique (Friedan, 1968). Friedan’s scholarship marks the beginning of feminism as an academic field and represents the inception of second wave women’s liberation movements in the United States. Feminist thought of the late 1960’s and early 1970’s espoused a common bond among all women. Theorists articulated ties based on similar experiences of sexism, a global “sisterhood” created by the system of patriarchy. Feminist scholars claimed society is structured in ways that privilege men and disenfranchise women in obtaining social benefits including individual power, prestige, and wealth (Tong, 1989).

It is argued that patriarchy maintains an ideological dimension and is supported by representations and images grounded in historical experiences delineating proper roles for women and men (Neville & Hamer, 2001). The notion of gender roles, are based on the social construction of femininity that relegates women to inferior positions in the social, political, and economic realm of the public sphere. For Friedan, the traditional gender roles of housewife and mother left women feeling “empty and miserable” (Friedan, 22). In this vein, the feminine roles of “wife” and “mother” were rejected and the male roles of “citizen” and “worker” should be adopted by women in order to achieve gender equity (Friedan, 1968).

The second wave women's liberation movement arising in the Post-Civil Rights era challenged the idea that the female role as mother was natural, biological, and immutable (Staples, 1973). Liberal Feminism, however, failed to question distinctions between the socially defined masculine public sphere and feminine private sphere. Its basic theoretical underpinnings were that women wanted to and could become like men through aspiring towards masculine values (Tong, 1989). Feminist scholars and activists called women to the public sphere yet, failed to subsequently call men to the private sphere. They furthermore neglected to recognize the restructuring of social relations necessary for the mass entrance of women into the labor force (Tong, 1989). Sexual equality in obtaining the benefits of society represented the most important goal of Liberal Feminists including Elizabeth Holtzman, Bella Abzug, Eleanor Smeal, Pat Schroeder, Patsy Mink, Leah Fritz, and Friedan herself.

Ideological and experiential differences with Liberal Feminism created rifts in the academic field producing new branches of the theory. In terms of both scholarship and movement goals Liberal Feminism sought equality with men without challenging structural and ideological domination shaped by race and class (Tong, 1989). Largely produced by white, middle-class, college-educated women, Liberal Feminism failed to address the daily realities of poor women of color (hooks, 1981).

Despite its call for global sisterhood, black women in both the Caribbean and United States maintained deep historically rooted justifications for not participating in the second wave feminist movement of the late 1960's and early 1970's. One primary reason stood as a pervasive distrust between black and white women enduring from the antebellum period. Black women were furthermore concerned about increasing tensions

between black women and men, as well as, diverting attention from the important issues of race and class impacting the entire black community (Springer, 2005). Unlike Liberal Feminists, black women did not perceive men as their enemy and recognized oppressive forces in society subjugating all African-descended people (Hudson-Weems, 1995).

Black Feminism

Black Feminist thought provides a systematic review and rearticulation of the distinctive self-defined standpoint of black women. Standpoint theory is derived from the observation that women's lives have been neglected and devalued as starting points for scientific research. Standpoint theory categorically analyzes specific social structural positions and the experiences arising from those particular conditions in generating knowledge claims (Calhoun, 1995). Drawing on standpoint theory, Black Feminism derives its assertions from the unique social structural location of black women and mediates between the knowledge of specialized experts and less-privileged voices to draw claims (Collins, 1990).

A myriad of interlocking oppressions framed within the political economy, nuanced by culture and socio-historical realities shape the experiential standpoint of Black women (Nelville & Hamer, 2001). In her pivotal work "The Intersection of Race and Gender," Kimberle Crenshaw explains the "experiences of women of color are frequently the product of intersecting patterns of racism and sexism...these experiences tend not to be represented within the discourse of either feminism or antiracism" (Crenshaw, 358). According to Kelley (2002), proponents of a Black Feminist ideology

commit themselves to restructuring social relations and ending domination by simultaneously challenging the connected social forces of race, class, and gender.

Black women's oppression is complex and results from three interdependent dimensions: labor, institutional racism, and the propagation of stereotypes and negative images. By reviewing the experiences of poor women of color, Black Feminists deviate from Liberal Feminists and articulate a shift in gender roles produced by the accompanying social forces of race and class. Lindsey (1970) argues that black women have consistently been distinguished from white women. She suggests white women are offered protections and privileges supported by their racial and class position. Based on race and class forces, black women in America have endured slavery, segregation, shared a large portion of family-responsibility, and have been important sustainers of their communities and its institutions. A common sisterhood based solely on sexism fails to recognize important distinctions in gender roles founded on differentiations in race and class.

For example, black women operate almost totally as a physical body and are constructed as sexual laborers (Lindsey, 1970). The political and economic configurations of society shape social constructions of race, class, and gender, historically during slavery and in the contemporary labor market (Nelville & Hamer, 2001). In the antebellum era black women maintained the responsibility of laboring in both the fields and the slave owner's house (Murray, 1995). She lived life as a captive labor force, even in terms of reproduction, and remained defenseless against her owner's sexual advances. Gender roles were profoundly shaped by the system of enslavement, where black women performed the same work as men (Davis, 1995).

Labor

The participation of black women in the workforce continued following emancipation from slavery. Although black males found it difficult to procure employment, black women were able to fill roles in the labor market as domestics (Staples, 1973). The simultaneous operation of race, class, and gender has historically relegated Black women to the lowest paying and lowest quality positions. In the United States, Black women have disproportionately held low-level service occupations including housekeeping, nursing assistants jobs, school cafeteria work, and similar employment. These types of occupations require both physical and mental strength (Nelville & Hamer, 2001). Black women are furthermore systematically exploited by being paid less for the same work as men (Staples, 1973).

The reality of black women as laborers has long stood as a primary source of tension between black women and men in American society. In a capitalist society the notion of manhood is fulfilled by the attributes of physical strength and economic earning power (Taylor, 1998b). White men effectively emasculated black men by not allowing them to assume the traditional patriarchal role of protector and provider to their families during slavery. This phenomenon continued post-emancipation when Black males found it difficult to procure work and women at times served as the sole breadwinner of their household. With the survival of the family at stake, the economic realities of a racialized and genderized labor market served to psychologically strain relationships between Black women and men (Staples, 1973). The irregularity of black male employment stands as a primary contributor to the prominence of black women in family affairs. During the

Black Power era, unemployment for Black males was two-times as high compared to their white counterparts and frequently led to the breakup of family life (Staples, 1973).

Issues of labor furthermore stand as a point of contention with Liberal Feminists who sought high-level positions in the job market and entry into the public sphere while black women were requesting higher wages, healthcare benefits, and more time to fulfill their roles as mothers. At the time Friedan published Feminist Mystique, over one-third of all women were part of the labor force (Tong, 1989). Although dominant ideology posits work as antithetical to motherhood, black women view their role of laborer as an important and valued dimension of their daily experiences as women and mothers.

Womanhood & Motherhood

For poor women of color, issues of labor area explicitly tied to conceptions of motherhood and womanhood. Motherhood possesses a dualistic nature among black women. Black women's prominent role in the African American community as providers and sustainers of their families since slavery has served as a means of resistance, yet also stands as point of ideological oppression. Due to black women's prominent role in their families and communities they are often referred to in terms that suggest power: strong, domineering, emasculating, and matriarchal (Lindsey, 1970; Davis, 1995). The mythical notion of an inherent resiliency and strength among black women has often been blamed for the social ills of the Black community (Hill-Collins, 1990). Because working mothers spend a great deal of time away from home, black women have been criticized in public discourse for emasculating their sons and defeminizing their daughters. (Davis, 1995)

During slavery black women were forced to fulfill a masculine role by working in the fields (hooks, 1989). Sojourner Truth's "Ain't I a Woman" spoke to the defeminization of black women who remained locked out of the "cult of womanhood," due to their labor outside of the home. Womanhood required piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity. Patricia Hill-Collins argues the "cult of domesticity" and motherhood as a "privatized female occupation" has never predominated in black communities (Hill-Collins, 1990). During the antebellum era white women fulfilled the bourgeois notion of womanhood solely through their role as mothers and serving as full-time caretakers to their children. Defined as such, femininity and its social manifestations were restricted to white women. Black women labored and toiled in the fields from sun up to sun down and their roles as mother represented the reproductive crux to the economic system of enslavement.

The myth of the matriarch neglects to adequately recognize the low social and economic status of black women, disproportionately concentrated at the bottom rung of the employment ladder in contemporary society (Murray, 1995). The ideological representation of black women as matriarchs furthermore dismisses structural foundations as the primary cause of poverty in the black community (Nelville & Hamer, 2001). In contemporary times, the disproportionate number of female-headed households in the Black community and eminence of Black women in their families are often falsely attributed to a matriarchal structure (Moynihan, 1965; Staples, 1973; Davis, 1995; Springer, 2005).

The myth of matriarchy operates in a way that bolsters the patriarchal social order. It casts Black women as emasculating their lovers and husbands due to an overly

aggressive posturing (Davis, 1995). The dominant cultural image of Black women as masculinized figures that dominate and control their families leads to the notion that the female must be subordinated (Staples, 1973). The logic behind criticisms of black women's prominent community and family roles implies the subjugation of black women is essential to a positive self-concept for black men (Roth, 1995).

Black Feminists rejected the desire of Black liberationists to restructure the family along patriarchal lines and simultaneously challenged the myth of the Black matriarch (Roth, 1995). In "An Argument for Black Women's Liberation as a Revolutionary Force," Mary Ann Weathers explained that, "Black women are not matriarchs but we have been forced to live in abandonment and been used and abused" (Weathers, 1959). There are various factors within the United States that are intensely antithetical and dangerous to the survival of the Black male, consider the high number incarcerated, participating in the military, or unemployed. According to Murray (1995) it is hard to evade the assumption that a great number of Black males lack stable ties and are not included as functioning units of the society. In either case, formidable pressures are created for black women.

The matriarchal myth of invincibility and strength often leaves women with the sole responsibility for child rearing (Hill-Collins, 1990). A large portion of black families headed by women lives in poverty. Although black women maintain a significant amount of family responsibility and a need for income, they are paid less. Joanne Clark's addition to The Black Woman anthology entitled "Motherhood" describes the reality of being a poor, single mother: "I'd been foolish enough to have two children, but then so had he. So now what kind of job was I supposed to do on my own head so that I could accept

doing very little else in the next few years except raising children on the lowest possible terms” (Clark, 70)

A significant factor contributing to the poverty of Black women is the amount of time they spend in unpaid domestic labor. Single-parent mothers must work to support their families financially, as well as, complete the myriad domestic tasks including cooking, cleaning, doing laundry, making doctor’s appointments, tutoring, and other tasks (Nelville & Hamer, 2001). Despite hardships, these experiences lead Black women to conceive of their unpaid domestic labor as a form of resistance due to its contribution to family survival and ability to transmit culture and values to children (Hill-Collins, 1991). Providing a better life for children stands as the foundation of Black women’s activism. Black women domestic toil long hours to provide their progeny with the skills and training they themselves did not or were unable to receive. Education remains an integral component of Black women’s drive for liberation (Hill-Collins, 1990).

Conceptions of motherhood represent another primary point of contention between Liberal Feminists and Black Feminists. Liberal Feminists conceived of motherhood as an oppressive, constraining gender role because it doomed middle-class women to life as a lonely suburban housewife (Kelley, 2002). Among African-American women the mothering role is given prominence and serves as a means of transmitting values between generations. In Black Feminist thought ideologies of motherhood are constantly negotiated between efforts to self-define the institution and motherhood as an institution benefiting race, gender, and class oppression (Hill-Collins, 1990).

Historically, American law restricted the progeny of Black women to a life of enslavement, yet the role of motherhood remained as a means of resistance against the

brutal system. Motherhood became a means for transmitting values to children, a way to teach history, culture, and proper social behavior under slavery (Hill-Collins, 1990; Davis, 1995). Angela Davis writing about women's roles in the slave community argued that raising children and maintaining households remained the only labor that could not be claimed by the slave owner (Davis, 1995). Black women were integral components to the retention of African customs and the survival of African-American communities prior to and post-emancipation through their creation of social networks based on West African values including the Black church (Hill-Collins, 1990; Gilkes- Townsend, 2001).

Activism

Black women have resisted oppression both in terms of their family lives and also through the direct challenge of dominant institutions by participating in collective action. According to Hill-Collins, "Black women cannot be content with providing for families, because those families are profoundly affected by American political, economic, and social institutions" (Hill-Collins, 1990). The primary roles played by black women during the Civil Rights movement were a continuation of their historical position during slavery and in the post-antebellum era. Central to black women's activism is a unique gendered motivation. Their social activism differs from that of Black men and is driven by shared experiences developed during slavery from mothering practices (McDonald, 1997).

Black women's activism is directly tied to their prominent role as mothers. According to Teresa A. Nance, black women fulfill three primary functions in social movements. The mothering role; as centers of the community black women helped support Civil Rights workers by bringing them into their homes, providing for their

needs, and introducing them to their communities. Furthermore, black women nurtured and supported one another's children, exchanging responsibilities and offering financial support when necessary based on general ethic of caring and accountability (Nance, 1996). This concept is known as "other-mothering" and stands as the foundation of black women's political activism. Women-centered networks and the concept of an extended family are grounded in West African values and were created in response to racial and gender oppression (Hill-Collins, 1990).

The often quoted statement "men led, but women organized," reflects the notion that women canvassed communities and more often attended mass meetings and demonstrations. Although women have most often been either de facto or de jure unable to fulfill formal, visible leadership roles, they have engaged in grassroots organizing efforts focused on community building and empowerment. Black women's activism reflects a unique orientation to the process of political organizing for the purpose of changing social policy (Nance, 1996). In terms of formal leadership black women routinely reject hierarchical relations of power between the leadership and the concentration of decision-making power within organizations (Hill-Collins, 1990). Ella Baker preferred a more decentralized grassroots approach to social movement organizing and helped found the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee following her departure from the male-dominated Southern Christian Leadership Conference. In her words, "strong people don't need strong leaders" (Springer, 2005). Black women tend to pursue group-centered leadership and define a leader as one who facilitates empowerment for others as opposed to gaining respect due to a charismatic personality (Nance, 1996). One perspective suggests that men tend to view leadership in terms of

power over, or the ability to control the behavior of others. On the other hand, women become powerful in order to spread power amongst others for the collective achievement of goals (Bate, 1988).

While black women in organizations rarely forwarded an agenda exclusively for women, the types of issues they championed and the way they operated reflect Afrocentric leadership (Hill-Collins, 1990). According to the Black Feminist Combahee River Collective “We might, for example, become involved in workplace organizing at a factory that employs Third-World women or picket a hospital that is cutting back on already inadequate health care to a Third World community....Organizing around welfare or day-care concerns might also be a focus” (Combahee River Collective, 239). The pervasive and multifaceted nature of Black women’s oppression necessitates activism, which addresses a range of issues such as healthcare, childcare, and education.

Black women’s experiences based on the interlocking forces of race, class, and gender remains distinct from the daily realities of more privileged white women. In comparison to their white counterparts, the structural and ideological dimensions of sexism manifest themselves differently. Historically, black women have not maintained the capacity to serve as full-time housewives and mothers and were furthermore defeminized due to their participation in the labor force.

As opposed to being passive and submissive, black women are constructed as matriarchs, strong, domineering, and emasculating. The implicit goal of Civil Rights was the reassertion of the male patriarch, in order to counterbalance the emasculating black woman (Springer, 2005). Yet, mythical notions of an inherent resiliency among black women neglects to recognize the class position of single-black mothers,

disproportionately relegated to the lowest-paying, lowest-level positions in the job market. The inability of black men to provide for and protect their families is not a result of black women's strength; rather it is a by-product of social structural realities organized around race, class, and gender forces.

As prominent members of their families and communities, black women utilize women-centered networks and grassroots approaches to altering their society. In directly challenging institutions Black women advocate a radical humanism, dedicated to altering social relations in both the public and private sphere. Liberal feminism sought full equality with men, yet their approach neglected to question the underlying ideological and structural dimensions of oppression. By interrogating their experiences and gender roles in society as both laborer and mother, Black Feminism reveals the interlocking systems of race, class, and gender as they operate in society.

Caribbean Feminism

Like Black Feminists, scholars of the Caribbean region believe the social forces of race, class, and gender, combined with the interactions between them are fluid and constantly subject to change based on historical circumstance (Foster, 1992). According to Mohammed (1995) there exists a "patriarchal negotiation," a social agreement dictating women's roles and shaping their daily experiences in society. The term "negotiation" is critical, for it implies ideologies about gender are ongoing, malleable, and start from specific class and cultural ideas about masculinity and femininity. Negotiations about gender take place on the individual, micro-level and the institutional, macro-level. Women strategize within a set of social constraints existing in both the

private and public sphere and this interaction demarcates the structure of the patriarchal bargain (Mohammed, 1995).

Patriarchal bargains are influenced by economic, social, and political transformations that open up new rifts and arenas for the reconciliation and renegotiation of gender relations (Mohammed, 1995). Similar to the United States, slavery represents the “master mould” by which notions of femininity and masculinity were constructed in the Caribbean (Beckles, 35). A history of enslavement and subsequent colonialism inextricably linked the social forces of race and class in Caribbean societies. Women’s lives exist within the context of a caste system scholars define as colour-stratification. Resources in society are allocated according to skin color, with the elite white planter class receiving the most and the laboring class of Africans, Indians, and Indigenous people receiving the least. There also exists a coloured middle class; a mixture of the planter and laboring class. In the United States, a woman from an interracial relationship between black and white may choose to, or may be forced by society to, define herself as black. In the Caribbean, men and women of mixed heritage comprise a racial category in and of themselves, with particular political, economic, and social meanings attached to their race.

C.L.R. James (1963) spoke to the divisive ideological positions held by women of different races and classes in his work The Black Jacobins as did Lindsay (1970) within the context of American society. In relations between women of different races, there existed “mutual antagonism, cruelty, and violence” (Beckles, 37). Elite white women understood the privilege attached to their racial classification and remained fundamentally racist in their outlook (Beckles, 1998). Comparable to the U.S., the

ideological institutions of femininity and womanhood remained elusive to black women. White women used their caste and class power to support the patriarchal pro-slavery argument that black females were not “women,” and therefore should be forced to labor in the fields (Beckles, 1998; Baksh-Sooden, 1998).

Labor

Related to the experiences of black women in America, the majority of African and East Indian women in the Caribbean have been involved in labor outside of the home and represent a source of material contributions integral to the sustenance of their families. (Osirim, 1997) Black women retained the “natural” duty of maintaining the household in addition to their labor in the fields and on the plantation (Davis, 1995). The phenomena of black women as laborers continued in the post-emancipation era. As a result, the image of the strong, independent “matriarch” is as pervasive among Caribbean women of African-descent as it is among African-descended women in the United States.

Conceptions of resiliency and extreme strength among Caribbean women, has been blamed for an existent male-marginality within the region. Comparable to the lack of male presence in black American households, men often play a limited role in family life and child rearing, in this sense are viewed as periphery to families (Shorey-Bryan, 1986). The same ideological dimensions propagated in American public discourse apply to the Caribbean expression of the matriarchal myth. Female-headed households are often viewed as responsible for the “spoiling” of their sons and husbands by “inculcating irresponsible male behavior as the norm” (Mohammed, 26).

Mohammed (1998) suggests that contemporary gender relations and struggles in the region are shaped by the “psychological scars of emasculation or defeminization” created by enslavement, indentureship, and migration (Mohammed, 1998). The process of emasculation and creation of stereotypes about black masculinity arise from the extreme humiliation associated with slavery in terms of punishment, as well as, the slave master’s power within the context of intimate relationships between black women and men (Mohammed, 1998). Comparable to Western conceptions of patriarchy, a primary characteristic of masculinity constructs the man as a protector and provider to his family. Yet, black men remained unable to completely fill this role during slavery. Bought and sold without regard to family ties, unable to ward off advances towards black women by White slave owners, as well as, being physically beaten, black men were stripped of conceptions associated with manhood. The phenomena of emasculation continued into the post-emancipation colonial era where West Indian blacks were not afforded the opportunity to govern their own affairs.

While black women are often blamed for the phenomena of emasculation and male-marginality, a closer look reveals economic forces similar to those operating in the United States. The realities of Caribbean women’s daily lives must be understood within a framework that takes into account the nature of Caribbean societies as plantation and migrant societies with dependent economies. Because the Caribbean economy tends to be export based in terms of one or two natural resources, there exists a high sex ratio between males and females produced by the exodus of predominately male migrant workers in search of employment (Shorey-Bryan, 1986).

Womanhood and Motherhood

Caribbean women have long maintained major responsibility for the care and nurturing of their families, as well as, the economic task of satisfying basic needs. Conceptions of womanhood and motherhood are tied to labor, a phenomenon equivalent to the United States. Work is not only natural, it is viewed as an integral part of their experiences, lives, and self-images (Ellis, 1986). Caribbean women of African-descent tend to link work to their responsibilities as mothers and broadly define labor as an activity necessary for the maintenance of their households (Osirim, 1997). According to Pat Ellis, access to money and a sense of independence served to broaden social relationships beyond the home and gave women considerable power within their families and communities (Ellis, 1986).

The Caribbean is matrifocal and not matriarchal in nature. The power of women within their homes and communities does not necessarily translate into institutional and ideological power. Domestic demands tend to limit women's capacity to resist instances of exploitation in terms of their time, paid wages, and bodies among other things (Rowley, 2002). The overall belief persists that women's income exists as a supplement to that of the male, yet many women employed in industry are the sole provider of financial support for their families (Osirim, 1997).

The Moyne Commission Report, written during the early 1920's, recognized the extreme poverty that existed in single-headed households because less money is available and men receive higher wages. Yet, the recommended remedy, according to the Moyne Commission, was that women should be granted adequate education for becoming companions for husbands (Rowley, 2002). Women in the region remain economically

vulnerable and, to a degree, recognize that they must accept male domination and a male-dependant role (Foster, 1992). Girls are taught strategies of independence in order to ensure the survival of their families with or without male presence. However, the societal notion simultaneously exists that a male mate is desirable and important. In addition, within the context of male-female relationships, males are understood as the dominant figures (Ellis, 1986).

The term matrifocality refers to a social process where women's role as mother in the domestic sphere maintains a direct correlation with their class position in society. Historically in the Caribbean, motherhood was defined in terms of its interaction with the colonial slave ideology and was critical to the perpetuation of slavery and pursuit of capital. Black women's reproductive systems remained at the core of enslavement, while white women maintained the social power to ensure their children's freedom.

Motherhood remains as a central focal point for women's self-identity in the Caribbean. High value and status is attached to the mothering role; women are expected to bear children and childless women are often looked down upon (Ellis, 1986). According to Mary Johnson Osirim, "even those who are not biological mothers often assume the role of surrogate mothers for children in the community" (Osirim, 43).

Among Caribbean women, there exists tremendous determination to provide for children despite personal levels of exploitation (Rowley, 2002). In line with the beliefs of African-American women, education is valued and women often struggle to provide it for their children as a means of ensuring economic mobility (Momsen, 2002). Personal sacrifices made for the sake of family responsibilities and child-rearing are traditionally viewed as investments for the future (Shorey-Bryan, 1986). Subsuming individual

aspirations for community upliftment is viewed as a form of heroism, it represents a vital component in understanding Black women's role in maintaining the culture (Terborg-Penn, 1995; Paravisini-Gebert, 1997).

While pregnancy and the mothering role remain central to the construction of Caribbean womanhood, marriage does not. The two issues are expressed as mutually exclusive categories and there exists a hierarchical relationship between marriage and childbearing; marriage requires training, motherhood is constructed as natural (Rowley, 2002). While marriage maintains high-social value, at all levels of society there exist a variety of mating patterns and unions including single-parent families and female-headed households (Ellis, 1986).

Activism

The activism of women in the Caribbean maintains strong similarities to the activism of black women in the United States. According to Terborg-Penn (1995), "the ways in which heroines have been revered and remembered by later generations is important to the understanding of women's roles in carrying on the culture of black people" (Terborg-Penn, 9). Their activism is explicitly tied to the social role of mother and caretaker of their families. First, black women in the Caribbean also maintain gender-based networks, similar to those of African-American women, which operate in resisting oppression, defining female leadership, and redefining political and economic roles for women (Terborg-Penn, 1995). Furthermore, the sacrifice of individual aspirations for the betterment of the community represents another component of women's activism (Paravisini-Gebert, 1997).

Nuance of Caribbean Feminism

One primary difference between Black Feminist thought and Caribbean Feminist thought is that each Caribbean society maintains its own unique composition of racial and ethnic groups leading to varying political tensions founded on race or class (Mohammed, 1998). The Caribbean is a site of multiple identities; the most influential members of which voluntarily or involuntarily traveled from foreign lands. These countries share not only geographic proximity but also the common experience of slavery, colonialism, and migrant workers (Springfield, 1997). Scholarship regarding Caribbean women attempts to root itself in the “historical and material conditions responsible for women’s choices and strategies in the region” (Paravisini-Gebert, 4). Currently, Caribbean feminism maintains an Afro-centric focus, yet there remains room for new interpretations based on the experiences of women from different racial and ethnic groups. Any broad, sweeping definition of Caribbean feminism stands subject to deviation depending on the particulars of the country in question.

Particularly in Trinidad, where there exists a large population of Indians as a result of indentureship, which began following the abolishment of slavery. Between 1845 and 1917, large numbers of Indians left the British crown-colony to work in the sugar cane-fields of another British crown-colony. According to Patricia Mohammed, “Indian women were expected to mirror themselves after the image of Sita, the virtuous, long-suffering, and faithful bride of Rama, the latter epitomizing the male patriarch in control of his household- in order to counteract the ‘westernizing influences of the colonizer” (Mohammed, 1998). Depictions of a passive, submissive East Indian woman stands in direct opposition to the strong domineering African matriarch.

In reality, only 1/3 of Indian women came to Trinidad accompanied by husbands. As laborers these women did not accept the view of Indian women as housewives (Momsen, 2002). Also, the family structure of the Indian community tended to differ from that of the African community. Female-headed households are found in conjunction with other types of family organization such as “the joint Indian family, the three-generation extended family, and the nuclear family” (Baksh-Soodeen, 74). There remains a great deal of work to be completed on the standpoint of East Indian women in the Caribbean. However, there are a great deal of similarities in the experiences of African and Indian women based on race and class.

African and Indian women both labored as slaves and indentured servants in the sugar-cane fields. Following the end of enslavement and indentureship, these women continued to work outside of the home. During the era of nationalist movements, East Indian women of color were encouraged to fulfill the role of faithful housewives. Yet, their experiences within Caribbean society due to class disallowed their participation in the European bourgeois notion of womanhood.

Caribbean feminist thought provides direction in better understanding women’s lives within these particular societies. Although the theory is Afro-centric in nature, the door remains open for the analysis and perspectives of women from different ethnic and racial backgrounds. Caribbean feminism lends itself to comprehending women’s experiences within the context of multiple social forces affecting their ideological and institutional position in the region. As a theoretical tool, Caribbean feminism provides context to research surrounding women’s activism, community concerns, and roles they adapt to or adopt in society.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

Research Approach

This thesis studies the experiences and roles of women in the Black Power movements of the United States and Caribbean using a qualitative research approach. This approach recognizes that from the perspective of the participants involved there exist multiple realities and perceptions within any given social setting. A qualitative approach allows for the in-depth study of a particular phenomenon from the view of the social actors themselves. The methodology is fluid in nature, allowing for the discovery of new ideas within a given context (Janesick, 1994; Berg 1995). Specifically, the research adopts a case study approach using oral histories

The research maintains a comparative component because it seeks to uncover the similarities and differences between women involved with the Black Panther Party and National Joint Action Committee. Comparative historical research pays close attention to cause and affect; explicitly analyzing historical sequences and attending to the unfolding of processes over time (Abott 1990, 1992; Aminzade, 1992; Pierson 2000a, 2000b; Rueschemeyer & Stephens, 1997; Tilly, 1984). This approach focuses on broad social organization and large-scale social forces, which influence patterns found on both the macro-level and micro-individual family plane (Mahoney & Rueschemeyer, 2003). By

reducing social phenomena to its component parts and situating women's experiences in their social background, the researcher is provided with a means of explanation (Huberman & Miles, 1994).

A comparative framework represents the most appropriate methodology for studying social movements (Goldstone, 2003). The rise of mass social action is not a static occurrence; rather it represents specific historical rifts following an accumulation of social, political, and economic events (Mahoney & Rueschemeyer, 2003). The value of a methodology that compares similar phenomena in two different countries occurring simultaneously lies in its ability to establish the generality or specificity of social science findings. Socio-historical idiosyncrasies can serve to explain cross-national differences and nuance previous investigative results, while similarities speak to the operation of common social forces on an international scale (Kohn, 1989).

Currently the historical literature surrounding African-descended people in the Diaspora does not assume the great similarities between African-American and Afro-Caribbean women (Staples, 1973). A comparative framework is designed to study larger social structures in order to make explicit comparisons that may or may not transcend national or regional boundaries (Berg, 1995). This paradigm provides the opportunity to both revise interpretations of phenomena and make comparisons between larger social structures dictating human behavior and thought (Berg, 1995).

The research maintains a feminist component because it seeks to insert women's voices into the academic gaps of historical records surrounding the two Black Power organizations. For women and men there exist systematically different experiences and realities based on constructions of gender (Anderson et. al., 1990). Qualitative methods

are especially accommodating when gender and women's issues are under scrutiny.

Women's understandings of social phenomena are contained within both the private and public realms. Significant events and experiences in women's lives are best illuminated through a qualitative research approach. Standpoint research, which builds on women's experiences, fits in well with understanding gender in the context of the Black Power movement (Olesen, 1994).

Method of Data Collection

The data for the study was collected through a series of oral histories from published documents and transcribed interviews to construct case studies of women's experiences in both organizations. Life stories and oral histories represent an excellent means for understanding the ways in which race, class, and gender shape daily realities (Bertraux, 1981, 1990; Bertaux & Kohli, 1984). When women speak for themselves, an understanding of their previously overlooked experiences can serve to cast doubt upon established theories and challenge the "truth" of official accounts (Anderson et. al., 1990). Whereas Black Power literature tends to neglect gender as a frame of analysis, the incorporation of oral histories allows for an exploration into the distinctive self-defined experiences of women in the movement.

Case Studies

The case-studies for this thesis maintain a particular focus on gender and women's experiences in the Black Panther Party and National Joint Action Committee. The case-study method reconstructs and analyzes an individual social occurrence and supplies the

opportunity for both testing theoretical propositions and developing causal explanations (Rueschemeyer, 2003). According to Louis Smith it is a "bounded system" comprised of working, integrated behavioral patterns and distinct structural features (Smith, 1978). Instrumental case studies utilize a specific occurrence as an emblematic representation of a larger phenomenon (Quinn, 1990; Stake, 1978). Due to their ubiquity in the literature and characterization as vanguard organizations, the Black Panther Party and National Joint Action Committee are selected as organizational manifestations of the larger Black Power movement.

In order to understand the perceptions and actions of black women in the United States and Caribbean, socio-historical context must be provided through considering broader social forces in operation. The case study is an in-depth, descriptive investigation of the Black Panther Party and National Joint Action Committee and seeks to comprehend the historical circumstances behind mass-action. A case study may utilize several methodological approaches to a myriad of data sources (Hamel, 1993; Miller & Salkind, 2002). Qualitative case studies may include interviews, participant observation, and field studies as means of providing participant perspective to a particular social phenomenon. (Hamel, 1993)

Triangulation

Triangulation is a convergent form of validation used to measure a single concept (Berg, 1995). Multiple data sets are used in order to check the consistency of claims made about a particular phenomenon. Triangulating historical analysis can greatly improve evaluation results because it allows the researcher to compare published literature with

interview data and archival materials (Quinn, 1990). The data utilized for this research takes three primary forms: prior research, non-referred sources including newspapers and organizational documents, and transcribed interviews.

Secondary research creates a basic starting point from which to ask larger questions about specific historical events. In this instance, the primary question is: what were women's roles and experiences in the Black Power movement? The case studies themselves were chosen due to their ubiquity in the literature and characterization as vanguard Black Power organizations. Published works provide insight into the public discourse of the time and helps situate the accumulation of socio-political and economic occurrences leading to the eruption of the social movement. By reviewing refereed sources regarding the Black Power era generally, the researcher provides context to the case studies.

The purpose behind the review of prior research is to understand the racial, class, and gender forces in operation during the late 1960's and early 1970's. Beginning with the work of historians, "structures of feeling" arise from the material and larger themes can be derived from the data (Williams, 1977). The research extends beyond a chronological collection of incidents and facts; it seeks to ascertain the conditions creating the social movement. "Historical research attempts to systematically recapture the complex nuances, the people, meanings, events, and even ideas of the past that have influenced and shaped the present" (Hamilton 1993; Leedy; 1993; Berg, 1995). Limited by the data or interpretations of the historiographies, the research of this thesis is supplemented by the researcher's own archival work (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

In addition to refereed sources, documents produced by both groups including

archived newspapers from the era and organizational pamphlets aided in compiling the case studies. Constructing the relationship among social actors in a given setting requires that the perspective of the actors themselves play a central role. This was accessed through Group newspapers and pamphlets that provide insight into the ideology, priorities, experiences, and roles of the organizations within the context of the Black Power era. Using primary sources also permits the researcher to check consistency in claims made by historians and published sources about the case studies. Articles from the Trinidad Guardian and Trinidadian Express pertaining to the Black Power movement, as well as, National Joint Action Committee documents were derived from the University of West Indies, St. Augustine West Indiana Collection. The University of Louisville maintains its own set of Black Panther Party newspapers stored on microfilm.

The dearth of gender analysis existing in Black Power literature was also found in organizational documents and newspapers. The researcher uses transcribed interviews, published autobiographies by Black Panther Party women, and published interviews as a means of enriching gender-focused data. To date, four former women members of the Black Panther Party have published autobiographies. (Davis, 1974; Shakur, 1987; Brown, 1992; Shakur & Guy, 2004) In various news and media publications the researcher was able to ascertain interviews with other former women members of the United States organization.

The Center for Gender and Development at the University of West Indies, St. Augustine maintains a collection of transcribed interviews with former women members of the National Joint Action Committee. The transcription allowed the researcher to access women's experiences and roles in the Caribbean organization. The interviews

were structured around several themes, including the following:

1. Questions about the interviewee, the Black Power movement generally, and National Joint Action Committee specifically.
2. Questions about women's experiences and roles within the organization; and finally,
3. Questions about East Indian women's involvement in the movement.

The researcher utilized extracts from five of the transcribed interviews and supplemented the information with publications by the Women's Arm of the National Joint Action Committee entitled The Black Woman.¹

Data Analysis

The researcher uses a five-step process in analyzing the data and constructing explanations.

1. The socio-economic and political context is established by the literature review.
2. The data specifically addressing issues of gender were categorized around the research questions.
3. With the assistance of a Black Feminist theoretical framework, the researcher isolated emergent themes and patterns within the Black Panther Party case study.
4. The variables arising from the United States data were compared to the experiences and roles of women in the National Joint Action Committee.

¹ Only five interviews were available because the UWI, St. Augustine Center for Gender and Development

5. Findings regarding women in NJAC were analyzed within the context of a Caribbean Feminist framework.

Using a combination of prior literature, archival data, and theory for direction, recurring themes within the data are examined from the standpoint of what they reveal about the experiences and roles of Black Panther Party women. Furthermore, it seeks to explain how these experiences were shaped by larger social structures. The variables derived from patterns found in the United States case study represent a conceptual framework by which the National Joint Action Committee findings can be compared. Known as “replication strategy,” evaluating the initial paradigm against successive case studies allows the researcher to determine whether the new model matches or if new themes emerge (Yin, 1984).

Theoretical Perspectives

Theories are a predicted pattern of events, which can be compared with actual observations of an occurrence. Good theory maintains categories, which fit the data and are relevant to the sample. (Huberman & Miles, 1994) Black Feminist and Caribbean Feminist thought represent guiding tools in describing and explaining women’s experiences in the Black Power movement and are more thoroughly explained in chapter 3. These theoretical frameworks provide thematic direction in comprehending the experiences of Black women. Black and Caribbean feminist paradigms isolate and explain patterns shaped by the interlocking social forces of race, class, and gender.

Organization of Findings

The description and explanation of qualitative data requires the researcher to ask the materials a specific set of questions (Strauss, 1987). By locating key phrases and statements that speak directly to the issue, responses can be bracketed according to the research question it addresses (Janesick, 1994). The findings regarding women's experiences and roles within the Black Panther Party and National Joint Action Committee are organized around the following questions:

1. What motivated women to become involved with the Black Power organizations?
2. What types of positions did women maintain in the organizational hierarchy?
3. What activities were women in the organizations involved with?
4. Were there recognizable gender concerns and roles that women maintained within the context of the Black Power movement?

This first phase of organization allows the researcher to work toward a set of analytic categories that are conceptually specified. Analytic induction is based on the idea that there are regularities to be found within the social world (Huberman & Miles, 1994). Focusing initially on women in the Black Panther Party, consistent patterns emerging from the data create variables maintaining a common property. Also referred to as "sensitizing concepts" these variables provide a general sense of reference and direction (Quinn, 1990). Conceptual frames stand as a heuristic device for discovery and can be identified through prior literature, research questions, and also theory (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996).

Generalizability, Validity, and Credibility

The generalizability of the research findings are enhanced by looking at multiple actors in multiple settings (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Because it is continually constructed, the notion of evaluating “experience” represents an untenable proposition in terms of investigation (Clough, 1993). Another charge is that the researcher may bring their own biases in attempting to describe and explain the qualitative data. Furthermore, credibility remains a particularly vulnerable spot within the context of designing objective research using perspective-driven qualitative data (Olesen, 1994). While these stand as valid concerns, the researcher continually crosschecked the consistency of information by comparing published sources with the archival data and oral histories. In order to strengthen the validity of claims, a multiplicity of standpoints emanating from a group of different social actors was considered in light of what was said about the same issue overtime from a diversity of refereed and non-refereed sources.

The findings emanating from this thesis are not generalizable to the experiences and roles of all women in the Black Power movement. Nor do these findings apply to all women members of the specific organizations in question. However, the claims drawn in this thesis highlight particular themes arising from women’s participation in the Black Panther Party and National Joint Action Committee.

CHAPTER V

THE BLACK PANTHER PARTY & WOMEN

The Black Panther Party (BPP) represents an organization influenced by its socio-historical, political, and economic context. It was formed in an Oakland, California poverty center on October, 15, 1966. Beginning their work in the most impoverished areas of the city, Bobby Seale and Huey P. Newton went door-to-door asking residents of the black community exactly what they wanted and needed for a better life. From their discussions Seale and Newton created the Ten-Point platform of “What We Want” and “What We Believe,” modeled from the Nation of Islam’s “What the Muslims Want” and “What the Muslims Believe” (Ogbar, 2004). Ideas within the Ten Point Platform represented a significant shift from Civil Rights strategies focused on integration to revolutionary action for the purpose of altering the entire socio-economic political system (Abu-Jamal, 2004). Lessons learned from Newton and Seal’s participation in various Civil Rights organizations caused the two to focus on bettering conditions for the average African American dealing with police harassment, substandard housing, and inadequate schooling on a daily basis.

The Black Panther Party grounded its politics in the ideologies of Frantz Fanon and Malcolm X. In its inception, the BPP was a self-described organization comprised of “brothers on the block,” a group referred to by Karl Marx as the lumpenproletariat. Party co-founder Huey Newton had been expelled from school, participated in burglaries, and

arrested for assault. Taking pride in his lumpen character, the organization sought to attract people from a similar background. Most early recruits of the BPP were gangsters and hustlers in the community and the organizations spread nation-wide did not halt this practice (Ogbar, 2004).

According to Alprentice “Bunchy” Carter, Newton tapped the revolutionary potential among street people and organized it into a direct onslaught against the power structure (Bush, 1999). In accordance with Fanon, Newton and Seales considered the downtrodden the most revolutionary faction of society who pushed the movement forward. (Ogbar, 2004). The BPP furthermore expanded the definition of the lumpen class to include Black women working in the domestic and service industries (Ogbar, 2004). Panther Eldridge Cleaver claimed that the lumpenproletariat, “have no secure relationship or vested interest in the means of production and the institutions of capitalist society” (Cleaver, 2). Similar to the Nation of Islam, the BPP sought out the participation of street people. Unlike the NOI, however, it did not attempt to reform lumpenproletariat behavior and illegal activity.

The toughness and rough-edges of lumpen culture evidenced itself in language used by party members. It was the belief of the Black Panther Party that utilizing the vernacular and colloquialisms of the lumpen allowed people to grasp their message where they would not otherwise understand. Fred Hampton claimed that profanity was an effective linguistic tool for relating to the people while other Black Nationalist organizations like the NOI refrained from using vulgarities in public (Ogbar, 2004).

Even though the BPP’s approach to mobilization and organizing differed from that of the NOI, the influence of Malcolm X upon the Black Panther Party specifically

and the Black Power movement in general cannot be overstated. As a national spokesman for the NOI during the early 60's, Malcolm visited mosques in the Bay Area, which both Newton and Seale attended (Ogbar, 2004). When Huey Newton heard Malcolm speak in Oakland he believed, "here was a man who combined the wisdom of book learning with the wisdom of the streets" (Bush, 1999). A "Remember the Words of Malcolm" piece was included in the weekly "Black Panther" newspaper and both Newton and Bobby Seale often claimed that the Party existed in the spirit of Malcolm.

In Meet Me in the Whirlwind: The Collective Autobiography of the Panther 21 many Black Panther Party members express their familiarity with the NOI and Malcolm X. Panther Richard Harris claimed to have quite a few Muslim friends, one of which finally convinced him to attend a Nation of Islam mosque. He describes being spellbound by Malcolm X, who fervently spoke about how Black people had been brainwashed by slavery. By Harris' account, "He took me out of my indecision and made me take the steps required to become a Muslim" (Balagoon et. al, 239). Panther Shaba Om read "Muhammad Speaks" regularly and, following his completion of The Autobiography of Malcolm X, joined the Muslim movement. (Balagoon et. al, 246) Ali Bey Hassan, another member of the Panther 21, attended Newark Temple 25 regularly with his wife and two cousins. Because Malcolm fearlessly stood up to racist America, Lumumba Shakur converted to the organization while in prison (Balagoon et. al, 240). In her autobiography, Evolution of a Revolutionary, Lumumba's wife Afeni Shakur, mother of Tupac Amaru discusses the connection between the Nation of Islam and Black Panthers (Shakur & Guy, 2004).

Newton viewed himself as the heir to Malcolm X and was highly influenced by

Malcolm's ideas on self-defense and struggling "by any means necessary." He felt that the BPP was successor to Malcolm's Organization of Afro-American Unity (Smith, 1999). Many instances of urban unrest in America had been sparked by cases of police brutality against Black people. For the Black Panther Party, police occupying black communities were an extension of military forces stationed in Vietnam at the time (Ogbar, 2004). In its inception the party focused on arming the Black community against police brutality and began patrols of the Oakland police to prevent harassment. (Smith, 1999) As followers of Fanon, the BPP adopted the notion that it was incumbent upon the colonized to violently resist in order to liberate themselves from the physical and psychological impacts of oppression. (Ogbar, 2004).

In an attempt to discourage police harassment and brutality, the Panthers armed themselves with rifles, shotguns, and other visible weapons. Whenever police stopped a black resident, a Panther patrol would arrive on the scene, brandishing weapons and carrying a law book to cite specific policies the police might violate. The notion of armed self-defense was attractive to many black ghetto youth and the Panthers consistently called for the black community to pick up the gun (Courtright, 1974). On May 2, 1967 thirty Panthers read Executive Mandate Number One at the state house in Sacramento to protest Donald Mulford's bill designed to prohibit armed Panther patrols of the police (Ogbar, 2004). This event catapulted the organization into the media spotlight and from this point the Black Panther Party decided to adhere to keen principles for garnering publicity.

A bold, brash, gun-toting media image was created that shocked American society with its rejection of racial integration and non-violent tactics (Ogbar, 2004). Guns

became central to Panther imagery in terms of both mainstream media constructions and organizational artwork including photos, pictures, and poetry. Weaponry was a symbolic representation of courage and militancy (Ogbar, 2004) A poem featured in the July 20, 1967 issue of the Black Panther included a poem entitled “Guns Baby Guns,” the piece ended by stating “And if you don’t believe in lead/ you’re already dead.” The gun represented the great equalizer, an empowering way to level the playing field. Huey Newton claimed, “if the black community has learned to respect anything it has learned to respect the gun.” In the eyes of the BPP, guns maintained the power to counteract the violence perpetrated against them by the armed racist power structure (Ogbar, 2004).

The Panthers became a major political force during the “Free Huey Campaign” organized by Eldridge and Kathleen Cleaver in 1968. Following a one-year anniversary party for the BPP, on October 28, 1967 Huey Newton was involved in a traffic stop and subsequently charged with manslaughter for the shooting death of Officer John Frey. Stokely Carmichael, H. Rap Brown, and other Black Power proponents spoke out on Newton’s behalf. Due to widespread knowledge of the relationship between African-Americans and the police, many believed Newton was justified and acted in self-defense. By 1970, the BPP mobilized 5,000 members in twenty states (Ogbar, 2004).

The BPP strategy involved a model of community organizing where the people themselves utilized their own strengths in developing their neighborhoods (Bush, 1999). This model is grounded in the praxis of Paulo Friere discussed in Pedagogy of the Oppressed and was evidenced by the multiple programs sponsored by the party. For example, the Seattle branch successfully operated three free breakfast programs, a medical clinic open twice weekly, and a free clothing store (Bush, 1999). The

organization helped people protest rent evictions, informed welfare citizens about their rights, and taught Black history classes. Its “Free Bussing to Prisons” program achieved a considerable amount of success and the “Free Commissary for Prisoners” provided legal aid and educational programs. (Bush, 1999).

In October of 1969 the organizational newspaper advertised for volunteers to prepare and serve breakfasts in Berkeley, it sought to recruit welfare mothers, grandmothers, and guardians in the community. By the end of the year, 19 cities and 23 local affiliates served a full free breakfast to over 20,000 children nationwide (Bush, 1999). The BPP provided multiple programs focused on healthcare as well. It sponsored George Jackson Free Medical Research Clinics which provided preventative medical care and treatment. The People’s Sickle Cell Anemia Research foundations tested individuals for genetic traits of the disease and sought to coordinate physician research (Bush, 1999). The “People’s Free Clothing Program” and the “David Hilliard Free Shoes Program” provided at least 500-600 Harlem residents with free clothing for children. (Bush, 1999)

The BPP maintained an economic ideology, as did most other Black Nationalist organizations. Newton bought into the notion that the production of goods should not be based on profit-making but, founded upon the needs of the people. The BPP rejected the system of capitalism as a valid form of economic organization because it did not allow the masses of people to participate in discussions as to what products or services should be produced and distributed. (Bush, 1999)

The Black Panther Party, however, did not adopt a cultural nationalist platform and ignored the challenge of cultural transformation within the movement. As an approach to revolutionary struggle, leaders were highly critical of the cultural nationalist

ideology. Panthers nationwide derided the African attire worn by many Black people. (Henderson, 1997) This rift was especially prevalent on the West Coast where the BPP was directly at odds with Maluana Karenga's US organization. Fred Hampton criticized the cultural nationalist who "runs around here tellin' you that when your hair's long and you got a dashiki on....and all this type of action, then you're a revolutionary, and anybody that doesn't look like you, he's not; that man has to be out of his mind" (Ogbar, 116). Although the BPP rejected cultural nationalism, unorganized street youth often imitated Panther dress. The black beret became a major icon of revolutionary nationalism and Black Power (Ogbar, 2004). The lack of cultural grounding, especially on the West Coast, led the BPP to become distant from their own Black communities and the organization came to rely increasingly on White leftists support (Henderson, 1997).

The Black Panther Party, initially organized by two young Black males, evolved into the vanguard organization of the Black Power Movement in America. The group politicized racial identity as a means of resisting the socio-economic structures that affected the daily lives of poor Black people living in America's inner-cities (Ogbar, 2004). The Party spread from the Bay Area to Philadelphia, Chicago, Harlem, New Orleans, Washington, D.C., even Louisville, KY as its ranks swelled into the thousands (Brown, 1992). The Black Panther maintained a weekly circulation of 100,000, second only to Muhammad Speaks in terms of Black news publications (Ogbar, 2004).

The BPP arose in the context of gangs and gang culture, which provided a lethal backdrop to its street-level Black Power activities (Ogbar, 2004). In the early 1970's Panthers attempted to organize gang truces across to the state of California. Los Angeles Panthers worked with the Crips and Slausons and Fred Hampton attempted to politicize

Hispanic gangs and the Blackstone Rangers in Chicago. Raymond Washington, founder of the Crips, incorporated surface features of Panther imagery into his philosophy, for example “Crip” was an acronym for continuing revolution in progress (Henderson, 1997). This gangster posturing and gun-pulling antics alongside physical attacks marred the Panther image and made them targets of government repression (Ogbar, 2004).

The Party’s demise was a direct result of government repression due to its militant posturing. The rhetoric of the gun had intentionally been toned down following multiple police raids on various Panther headquarters. The Panther 21, the arrest of Huey Newton, and railroading by the court system of other BPP members stand as a testament to the power of COINTELPRO in dismantling the revolutionary organization.

Despite its brash gun-toting masculine image the Black Panther Party (BPP) attracted a membership that was comprised of an estimated 2/3 women. Even with such a large female membership, the organization is portrayed as a male-dominated phenomenon with the condition of Black men standing as its focal point. The perception and reality of women’s status and roles within the Party were influenced by multiple religious and political ideologies prevalent during the 1960’s, all of which supported advertently or inadvertently, a gender ideology of female subordination.

Women & the Black Panther Party

In discussing the roles and experiences of women within the organization, this section utilizes interview extracts, autobiographies, and other forms of published literature representing the views and experiences of women in the BPP. This section of the chapter begins by surveying a few of the reasons women came to be motivated to join

the Black Panther Party. Second, it assesses women's roles within the organization from the perspective of both women and men. This section furthermore discusses the influences upon the changing perception of women's roles within the BPP. Third, the findings are used to explore the issue of sexism and how women responded to sexual issues within the party. Discussions and conclusions are reserved for chapter 7.

Why Women Joined the BPP

The findings revealed that women were motivated to join the organization because of their attraction to the Black Nationalist movement. The era ushered in a worldwide axiological shift towards self-determination and nation building among Black people on a global scale. The pervasive consciousness-raising surrounding the racial and class status of African-descended people touched both women and men. In particular, an agenda that addressed racism and other forms of oppression linked to racism, attracted women to the movement. For example, Springer (2005) explained that during the 1960's women involved in Black Nationalist movements declared their primary allegiances were to ending racism.

The findings showed that although racism stood as a central concern to BPP women, they were also mindful that sexism was a major form of oppression for all women in the U.S. Many of them expressed a Black Feminist consciousness and believed that the sexual oppression of black women was explicitly linked to other forms of oppression, including racism and poverty (Chioma, 1981). Black women, felt the impact of race, class, and gender oppression not only in the public sphere but also in the private domain where they exercised the role of mother and caretaker to their families. The Black Panther Party therefore represented a viable option for many black women to address

larger issues of domination linked to racism and poverty, not just issues of sexism. According to Robin D.G. Kelley, radical black women offered up, “one of the most comprehensive visions of freedom,” dedicated to addressing the interconnectedness of race, gender, sexuality, culture, class, and spirituality struggles (Kelley, 154).

In her autobiography, now-exiled Panther Assata Shakur wrote she had been drawn to the organization because of the Party’s ideology. Its critique of racism and capitalism, as well as, its international perspective regarding oppressed people suffering from imperialism and colonialism worldwide, caused Shakur to gravitate towards the Black Panther Party (Shakur, 1987). Afeni Shakur heard Bobby Seale speak on 7th Ave and 125th Street in Harlem. Seale moved Afeni with his speech about taking up arms against aggression and she describes in her autobiography how the ten-point platform was based on a humanist vision of liberating all peoples (Shakur, 2004).

Former member Yvonne King explains in the following quote,

“It wasn’t merely an adventure for me. I didn’t view it as that. I recognized the work they were doing was important. There was discrimination going on throughout the country, racism. I was attracted by the Party’s boldness and assertiveness, and the fact that they were organized stood out to me. They caught the imagination of the people, including me” (Yvonne King Interview, 2004).

Women of the Black Panther Party consistently recognized the interconnectedness between race, class, and gender oppression. The organization’s platform displayed and addressed the intersections among these social forces and became a rationale for women joining BPP ranks. For example, Kathleen Cleaver explained that focusing on gender alone could not address the most important question of how to empower oppressed and impoverished people struggling against racism, militarism, terrorism, and sexism. In her own words she explains:

“Newton used to say we have to capture the people’s imagination. That was a goal, to attract people into this movement. When you look at the Ten Point Program, it articulates the very same goals that have been articulated by free blacks after slavery, over and over. These were very mainstream goals: decent housing, justice, access to education, the ability to create wealth” (Kathleen Cleaver Interview, 1994).

Cleaver had already been involved with the Black Power movement through a campus program of SNCC chaired by Stokely Carmichael. University ties and involvement with college organizations represented a vehicle by which women came to join the Black Panther Party. The assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, President John F. Kennedy and his brother Robert; the Vietnam War, nuclear proliferation, and the Cold War; profound economic shifts and racial tensions profoundly impacted college student life. University campuses began debating and mobilizing within the context of a tumultuous political, social, and economic atmosphere during the 1960’s. The impetus for and creation of Black Student organizations and Black Studies Departments by post-Civil Rights youth reflected the larger consciousness-raising of the time.

Like Kathleen Cleaver, Barbara Easley joined the Black Panther Party through university ties from her involvement with the San Francisco State Black Student Union (Barbara Easley Interview, 2004). While attending Manhattan Community College Assata Shakur joined an African cultural group named “The Golden Drums.” She began reading poetry by Sonia Sanchez, attending plays written by Amiri Baraka, and surveying Black organizations including the Black Muslims and Garveyites (Shakur, 1987).

Women's Roles in the BPP

Women's roles in the Black Panther Party were profoundly influenced by dominant gender ideologies of the era placing women within the domestic, private sphere and socially constructing men's role as being outside of the home in the public sphere. These ideologies manifested themselves within the context of the BPP and oftentimes served to relegate women into menial positions associated with domestic work. However, the position of women in the BPP did not remain static and shifted in accordance with the party's overall ideology and position in society.

In the early years of the Party's existence, Kathleen Cleaver represented the only visible female leadership within the Black Panther Party. Elaine Brown recounts her experiences by claiming:

"A woman in the Black Power movement was considered, at best, irrelevant. A woman asserting herself was a pariah....If a Black woman assumed the role of leadership, she was said to be eroding Black manhood to be hindering the progress of the Black race. She was an enemy of the people" (Brown, 1992; 362).

According to Cynthia Enloe, women in revolutionary movements were treated by the men as mere symbols as opposed to active participants. Women were frequently urged to fulfill the role of "ego-stroking girlfriend, stoic wife, or nurturing mother." (Taylor, 244) The role of Black women in revolutionary struggle was narrowly defined and oftentimes based on subservience to a man and relegation to the domestic sphere. Some Panther women, such as Judy Hart, internalized the notion that they should develop a womanhood in which her man and his concerns became the focal point of life. In the words of Hart, "he moves from the periphery into the center" (Taylor, 1998).

In an article entitled the "Black Woman," Panther women were encouraged to take a supportive role in promoting the "awakening of consciousness within their men."

According to its author, identified as “A Black Revolutionary,” “He can then show his true manhood....Just being a Black woman is not enough, it is what the Black woman can contribute to the Black man that is important” (“Black Woman”, 6). Panther Gloria Bartholomew mirrored this view and claimed that a Black woman’s chief function was to live for her man. Rather than pursuing “white ways” of gaining equality with the Black man, the woman’s place was to “stand behind her man so if he falls she can hold him up with her strength” (Bartholomew, 11). Linda Greene expressed similar sentiments in her article “Black Revolutionary Woman.” She writes, “this woman is and must be [the] Black man’s everything....She is what her man and what her people need her to be” (Greene, 11).

Although it neglected to be a cultural nationalist group, the Black Panther Party initially conceptualized women’s roles as one of mother and educator to their children. It is, however, important to note that Black women tend to adopt an Afrocentric approach to activism and most often place family and community issues first (Hudson-Weems, 1995). The primary roles of women were to provide and prepare their offspring for participation in the revolution; the Black woman maintained an obligation to create a better life for her own family. (Greene, 1968)

Conceptions and constructions of gender roles within the Black Panther Party did not remain static. The position of women within the organizational hierarchy of the Black Panther Party underwent dramatic changes over the course of its history. Afeni Shakur maintained a prominent leadership role in the east coast branch of the Black Panther Party. As a section leader in the Bronx and Harlem following the arrest of Lumumba Shakur and Sekou, she helped the PTA open twenty-eight public schools, organized in

Harlem for a Black principal in a predominately Black school, educated welfare recipients about their rights, and helped them find jobs (Shakur, 2004).

During the period of 1974-1976, while Huey P. Newton was exiled to Cuba, Party Chairwoman Elaine Brown appointed numerous women to high-level positions in the organizational hierarchy. Brown installed Black law student Beth Meader as her campaign manager, Phyllis Jackson as coordinator of party campaign workers, Ericka Huggins as administrator of the school and its affiliate programs and projects, Joan Kelley as administrator of the Survival Programs and legal matters, and Norma Armour as the coordinator of the Ministry of Finance. For the first time in the Party's history, women were concentrated in leadership positions making their contributions to the movement more visible (Brown, 1996).

One primary impetus for change in the Party's gender ideology, pertaining to women's roles, was the unbiased response by the Federal government and police forces to Party women. In an interview, historian Angela Brown explains:

"Particularly between later 1968 and 1970, women became more aware of their gender. They realized that they were being attacked as viscerously during police raids, and they were being called upon just as much as others to stand guard and do all the other things men were doing" (Brown, 1996).

Assata Shakur's autobiography begins with her being beaten in the hospital by police. The treatment she received while incarcerated is one of the worst ever recorded violation of human rights while imprisoned (Shakur, 1987). Joan Bird had been beaten, tortured, and hung out of a jail window after being placed in the Women's House of Detention and received no medical attention following the incident (Guy & Shakur, 2004). Such occurrences caused the Party to dismantle its practices which, relegated

women to menial tasks such as typing, cooking, and the like. As a group of Panther women explained in an interview:

“[There] used to be a difference in the roles of men and women in the party because sisters were relegated to certain duties. This was due to the backwardness and lack of political perspective on the part of both brothers and sisters. Like sisters would just naturally do the office-type jobs, the clerical-type jobs. They were the ones that handled the mailing list” (Panther Women on Liberation, 1969).

As women moved into leadership positions they did not lose sight of their specific gender concerns attached to their role as mother. According to Tracye Matthews in “No One Ever Asks What a Man’s Role in the Revolution Is,” the post-1968 Black Panther Party directly addressed the needs of Black women, especially those with primary responsibility for child-rearing. The concerns Black women maintained circled around the ways in which race and class impacted their role as mothers. The subsequent activities women party members involved themselves with were a reflection of this verity. Black women began to realize their activism was directly linked to issues of gender and the social role of mother.

Women provided leadership and personnel for the community programs, which represented an extension of traditional roles for women (Matthews, 1995). As Frankye Malika Adams explains, “when you really look at it in terms of society, these things are looked on as being women things. You know, feeding children, taking care of he sick, and uh, so yeah, we did that. We actually ran the BPP’s programs” (Abu Jamal, 164).

The activism of Black women reflects a tradition of “other-mothering,” a form of cultural work necessary for the survival of African-American people since slavery. Ella Baker typifies the existence of an activist other-mother. Her childhood socialization taught her to accept personal responsibility for the racial uplift of the entire Black

community (James, YEAR). In her autobiography Afeni Shakur articulated a belief in answering the communities needs and restoring it from within. In the article “Black Woman,” the author explains that poor Black women need help because,

“she is the mother of children who has been left by her Black man....This woman is left to fend for herself and her children alone....They are at the mercy of exploitative, inadequate welfare agencies. These Black women therefore have little or no representation. They have no choice but to look to the community for help” (“Black Woman”, 9).

The community-based activities and focus of the BPP mirrored the types of survival networks created and established by black women for child rearing during the antebellum era. Former member Sufiyah Bukhari explained the political ideas and activities of the Black Panther Party did not move her to join the organization. However, she volunteered to feed hungry children out of her concerns for the community (Abu-Jamal, 169). Women played a prominent role in the multiple community programs organized by the Black Panther Party including Liberation Schools, Medical Cadres, and Free Breakfast Programs. Party member Naima Major describes her activities with the Black Panther Party:

“Devoted to the Black revolution and the Ten Point Program, I commenced with baby in sling to doing the hard community organizing work required of all Panthers, organizing poor women like myself, planning and supporting free schools, writing letters for people who couldn’t write, demanding decent housing for people who were afraid of the landlord, helping get the newspaper out, health cadres, you name it” (Abu-Jamal, 177).

Similarly, Safiyah Bukhari describes the organization’s work with impoverished women of color:

“As part of my work, we did community self-defense, community organizing, the breakfast programs, the liberation schools. I did welfare rights organizing. The welfare rights organization that came into existence came our of a lot of the work we did organizing welfare mothers” (Henry,).

Negotiating Sexism

The existence of sexism within the Black Panther Party is complex and speaks to the subconscious operation of patriarchal thinking. As a group of Panther women explained:

“I think it’s important that within the context of that struggle that Black men understand their manhood is not dependent on keeping their Black women subordinate to them because this is what bourgeoisie ideology has been trying to put into the black man that’s part of the special oppression of Black women” (Panther Sisters on Liberation, 1969).

In its inception, according to Afeni Shakur, women within the party were not to be treated as sex symbols (Guy & Shakur, 2004). However, from the expectation that women should play a supportive role, Party men sometimes claimed women’s capitulation to sexual demands equated with their dedication to the movement. One night in Oakland, Shakur herself was approached by co-founder Huey Newton who told her that she “should be honored to sleep with him” because he was the king of the Black Panther Party (Guy & Shakur, 77). Similarly, Party member Earl Anthony once claimed that, “a true sister would be happy to sleep with a revolutionary brother” (Perkins, 96).

The Black Panther Party rejected the ownership of a lover and espoused an individual’s freedom to have multiple partners. Although this sexual openness can be viewed as, “a means of celebrating life against a backdrop of danger and devastating loss,” it can also be viewed as a tool used to reinscribe patriarchal privilege (Perkins, 94). For men who often for the first time in their lives exercised extraordinary power over others, sexism became a tool of dominance (Abu-Jamal, 2004).

A strategy employed by some party women to counteract sexism, was to adopt a “masculine” style of behavior and posturing. Assata Shakur describes a conversation after

being asked by a group of Panthers in California why she had not yet joined the Party. She explained, “I had been turned off by the way the spokesmen for the Party talked to people, that their attitude had often been arrogant, flippant, and disrespectful” (Shakur, 204). Shakur later recounts an incident where the head of the Party’s East Coast Branch Robert Bey had thrown away her newspapers which, she was to sell on the street corners of Harlem. After Bey addressed Shakur in an arrogant manner, she “cursed him out royally and walked out of the office” (Shakur, 218). Although this tactic of macho pretentiousness by women may have reinforced the notion of Black women as domineering, it also challenged the idea that only Black men should lead and protect Black women (Matthews, 1995).

During the late 1960’s and early 1970’s Black women began raising questions about the meaning of manhood and how black people could redefine sex roles (White, 2001). Afeni Shakur learned to dismantle weapons and trained women in the Party to make them qualified soldiers (Guy & Shakur, 2004). A poem written by Comrade Candi Robinson featured in the Black Panther implored Black women to “educate our men, and bring their minds from a male chauvinistic level to a higher level.” She continues, “we are their equal halves, may it be with gun in hand, or battling in the streets to make this country a socialist lead” (Robinson, 1968).

In discussing issues of sexism within the Black Panther Party it is important to understand the causes for its axiological shift towards greater gender equality. Sufiyah Bukhari contends that ideologies about gender roles within the Black Panther Party were well ahead of other Black Nationalist organizations in existence at the time (Matthews, 1995). Afeni Shakur believed the Party provided a platform from which to fight sexism

(Guy & Shakur, 2004). Similarly, a number of women involved in Black Nationalist organizations believed the best way to overcome sexism was to work side-by-side with men (Springer, 2005).

CHAPTER VI

THE NATIONAL JOINT ACTION COMMITTEE & WOMEN

Whereas the Black Panther Party represented the vanguard organization of the Black Power movement in America and was present in Trinidad and Tobago, it did not achieve the same prominence on the Caribbean island. The core organization responsible for the mobilization of people in Trinidad was the National Joint Action Committee (NJAC). NJAC was comprised of a loose coalition of groups, a diversity of individuals from various backgrounds including university students, recent graduates, radical trade unionists, and grassroots activists served as the leadership cadre of the organization. It was formed to coordinate the Black Power movement with an initial focus on supporting West Indians in Canada involved with the Sir George Williams affair (Riddell & Thomas, 1971; Kamboon, 1995).

Fueled by growing political awareness, the Sir George Williams incident was sparked by the Canadian university administration's apathy towards allegations of racial discrimination by a biology professor. West Indian students, along with their white allies, occupied the University's computer center and refused to leave until their specific demands had been addressed. The affair culminated with a fire that damaged the computer center. Ten Trinidadians were subsequently charged with ten criminal counts, including arson carrying up to a life sentence in prison (Belgrave, 1995). For

Trinidadians, the event merely dramatized the indignities suffered by their nation everyday at the hands of Canada and other Western powers (Riddell & Thomas, 1971). Angry protests surrounding the incident prevented Canada's Governor General from entering the University of West Indies, St. Augustine.

The Sir George Williams affair served to unite the black communities in Montreal and became the primary issue around which radical and progressive organizations in Trinidad united to form the National Joint Action Committee (Riddell & Thomas, 1971; Belgrave, 1995). The formation of the organization marked the emergence of a broad-based social movement in Trinidad and Tobago (Gosine, 1986). The beginning of the student's trial in Canada provoked a march on February 26th, 1969 and this protest sparked the mass Black Power movement in the country. NJAC organized the demonstration to call for solidarity with the West Indian struggle taking place in Canada. The specific targets of the protest were the Roman Catholic Cathedral and foreign-owned businesses in Port of Spain, both were viewed as symbols of white power (Riddell & Thomas, 1971; Riviere, 1972).

The Trinidadian Express relayed the news on the following day by explaining that 200 demonstrators entered the Roman Catholic Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Independence Square. The sit-in lasted a little under an hour yet, the full ten-hour demonstration through the streets of Port of Spain culminated with a clash with police inside the Royal Bank of Canada (Pantin & Boisselle, 1970). This incident served to localize the Black Power struggle and marked the beginning of the 1970 Revolution in Trinidad (Belgrave, 1995).

Under pressure from the foreign and local business community the government cabinet met in an emergency session and called for the arrest of eight march leaders under an 130 year old law meant to curtail the mobility of newly emancipated slaves (Riviere, 1972). College students Dave Darbeau and Russell Andalcio, as well as the former and outgoing presidents of the guild of undergraduates at University of West Indies Geddes Granger and Carl Blackwood respectively were among those taken into custody. The group was refused bail until March 5, 1970 and indicted with unlawfully assembling at Independence Square (Pantin & Boisselle, 1970).

The Student's Guild issued a statement published in the Express on March 1, 1970, "It seems that those who were calling for justice for their fellow nationals in Canada were treated as if the Offences which they allegedly committed were more serious than those of their compatriots in Canada," adding that the actions were carried out by a supposedly Black government (James, 3). That Thursday, President General of the Oilfield Worker's Trade Union George Weekes publicly condemned the arrest of Black Power demonstrators by police and referred to them as "patriots fighting for the dignity of Trinidad and Tobago" ("I Should Have Joined the March," 10).

At this point the organization shifted its focus from dealing with racism in Canada to making connections with the grassroots in its own country (Riviere, 1972). In the period immediately preceding the movement's upsurge NJAC was involved in two community struggles. In central Trinidad in the East Indian community of Montserrat, the organization's leadership was involved in mobilizing workers against the encroachment of the largest sugar company and British-owned subsidy, Caroni Limited. The confrontation assumed critical proportions and the government was forced to intervene,

ruling in favor of the peasants and prevented the company from acquiring East Indian land. The second struggle was taking place in the southwest Trinidadian community of Santa Flora where residents were engaged in a longstanding dispute with the local city council for better community services. Protests organized by NJAC leadership ultimately led to victory for Santa Flora residents (Gosine, 1986).

March 3rd NJAC hosted a rally with thousands in attendance. Member Russel Andalcio addressed the crowd, defining the role of the university student for his audience (“Shanty Town is a Symbol”, 1970). He argued that intellectuals and scholars were required to become involved in providing solutions to the problems of the society, an idea previously espoused by Walter Rodney in his influential work Groundings with my Brothers. At the invitation of NJAC chairman Geddes Granger, one woman resident of Shanty Town spoke out and claimed that the government had not fulfilled its promises to the community in which she lived (“Shanty Town is a Symbol”, 1970). Granger responded by claiming that the “plight of people in Shanty Town was their plight” (“Shanty Town is a Symbol”, 13).

NJAC had come to understand that a mass movement must focus on the daily concerns of the people and shifted its program accordingly (Riviere, 1972). The organization began to host public meetings, centered around five basic points of discussion, at strategic locations in the main population and business centers. The group did not believe in conventional politics and its ideals reflected the influence of Paulo Friere and Rodney. The primary goal of the organization was ownership of the country, which was a process requiring the involvement of the entire society. The historical experience of Blacks in the Caribbean since slavery including the role of the church was

widely discussed, and the ideals of Fanon came to be the foundation on which notions of white domination rested. NJAC sought to place Trinidad and the larger Caribbean within the context of the international capitalist framework and discussed issues of color-stratification within the society. Finding further reflection into the ideology of Fanon, there remained remarkable unity on the question of physical violence as acceptable approach to the process of decolonization (Riviere, 1972).

The National Joint Action Committee was highly influenced by dominant discourse surrounding Black Power and its platform bore a striking resemblance to the advocacy of Walter Rodney. Its ideology was part of the worldwide struggle for Black Power and skin color stood as the central ingredient in NJAC's conception of Black Power. Its major positional pamphlet "Conventional Politics or Revolution" read, "the very important racial element of Blackness in the ideology of struggle in the Caribbean is the result of an economic system founded on the calculated dehumanization of the Black Man by the White man" ("Conventional Politics or Revolution", 1970). The organization was specifically anti-imperialist and targeted Canadian-controlled banks, the United States exploitation of its minerals, and British control over its agricultural exports" (Meeks, 149). NJAC believed the movement must involve the principles of Marxism-Leninism and pursue the revolutionary goal of placing ownership of the country in the hands of the proletariat (Gosine, 1986).

March 5, 1970 an act of police brutality outside the magistrates court against supporters of the eight arrested leaders sparked further demonstrations. Molotov cocktails and arson directed at foreign banks, business places, party offices, and police stations erupted and persisted throughout the uprising (Riviere, 1972). The following day a

massive demonstration comprised of an estimated 20,000 people marched through Port of Spain to protest the arrest of leaders such as Geddes Granger, Clive Nunez, and others (Riviere, 1972). Thousands of demonstrators marched to San Juan at Croisee, targeting banks and a drugstore. Black Power groups from several areas in Trinidad and Tobago arrived at Woodford Square around 3pm in the afternoon and continued to meet until past 9 pm at night (“Black Power March to San Juan”, 1970). Singing and drumming took place and Black Panther leader Aldwyn Primus took the stage, listing off revolutionary names including Stokely Carmichael, Aime Cesaire, Che Guevara, Eldridge Cleaver, Malcolm X, and Frantz Fanon (“Black Power March to San Juan”, 1970).

The character of the movement endorsed and projected by NJAC leadership during this period was central to its activities. From the movement’s inception, the leadership’s preoccupation had been with the mobilization of forces from a single ethnic group. All of the organizations comprising NJAC maintained an African membership base. Furthermore, leadership in effect partitioned the island, directing its efforts at the urban and industrial working class segment of the national population, not rural areas where many East Indian organizations were located. Once again, NJAC shifted its organizational platform. During this period, the leadership actively sought the support of a few East Indian street corner societies and argued in favor of the East Indian working class. The Caroni demonstration under the banner of Black-East Indian solidarity represents the first significant action in merging the predominately African oil workers and East Indian sugar workers (Gosine, 1986). At this point, the term Black Power was meant to incorporate all non-white people including East Indians.

On Friday, March 13, a crowd of around five hundred Black Power demonstrators departed from Woodford Square at around 7:20 in the morning and marched toward the sugar-belt of Trinidad as a symbol of African and East Indian solidarity. George Weekes, Dave Darbeau, Clive Nunez, Carl Blackwood, and other NJAC leaders made the 28 mile, 14 hour march which, reached a peak of around 6,000 participants. The target had been the British-owned sugar company Caroni limited and initial plans called for the African, urban masses to help rural, Indian workers to cut and stack cane; although, by the time the protest arrived at 1:30 in the afternoon most of the work had been completed (Codallo, 1970; Pantin, 1970). The Trinidad Guardian the following day wrote that the march proved Black power demonstrators were “capable of orderly, disciplined, and constructive behavior” and that the East Indian response was “friendly, more observant than participant” (Guardian 3/14/70; 6).

From early March through April the centrifuge of the movement vacillated up and down the island, with flare-ups occurring on the island of Tobago. At eight am, on April 10th, a twenty-seven mile protest from Scarborough to Charlotteville in Tobago became the “biggest demonstration in the history of the quiet island” (“Second Power March in Tobago”, 7).

During the first week in April, George Weekes and Clive Nunez led a wave of work stoppages began involving workers in the construction, customs, transport, electricity, water and sewage, paper mills, post office, and sugar industries (Riddell & Thomas, 1971). Thursday April 16th, employees at the Hilton Hotel extension, Water and Sewage Authority pumping station in Maracas, and Bottlers Limited went on strike. The next day thousands more stopped work and postmen protesting conditions picketed

Whitehall. That Sunday, 600 daily paid workers quit work at Brechin Castle. The following day, 3,000 workers went on strike in Caroni (“15 Black Power Leaders Held”, 1970).

The Revolution, however, began to disintegrate following the declaration of a State of Emergency by Prime Minister Eric Williams. Fifty-four civilians were detained under Emergency Power Regulations and eleven prominent NJAC leaders were charged with sedition including George Weekes, Geddes Granger, Dave D’Arbeau, Clive Nunez, Winston Lennard, Russel Andalcio, Abdul Malik, Winston Suite, Chan Maharaj, and Errol Balfour (“The Question”, 1970; Riddell & Thomas, 1971; Riviere, 1972). NJAC was not a mass organization, it was comprised of a small group of leaders with mass following, an important distinction. With its leadership arrested, the organization was immobilized and there was no grassroots structure linking and coordinating organizational committees across the country (Riddell & Thomas, 1971).

Following their release from prison in November of 1970, core members Granger, Darbeau, and a small number of other leaders regrouped and the organization continued to function primarily as a Black cultural group. In the 1981 general elections, NJAC participated as a political party and although unsuccessful in its bid for political power the organization began to muster support from certain sections of the Trinidadian community (Gosine, 1986).

Women & the National Joint Action Committee

Due to the operation of similar race, class, and gender forces the experiences and roles of women in the National Joint Action Committee (NJAC) parallel the findings

regarding women in the Black Panther Party. The status and roles of women in NJAC were profoundly intertwined with the matrifocal nature of Caribbean society mentioned in chapter 3. It is a geographic region where women tend to maintain prominent positions within their homes and communities as both breadwinners and caretakers for their families, a status mirroring that of African-American women in the U.S. A further equivalent to the United States includes the impact of black male emasculation discourse in shaping dominant ideologies about women's place in society. These discussion helped shape and dictate the standing of women in the organizational context. To meet the objective of this research selected information from transcribed interviews were organized around the research questions.

Why Women Joined NJAC

The interviews revealed Trinidadian women's motivation for joining NJAC were similar to the impetus driving women to participate in the Black Panther Party. Consistent threads arising from the data included a concern for the racial and class position of Black people globally. In addition, ties to politically active college and secondary school campuses drew women to the Black Nationalist organization. The politically active household backgrounds of some women influenced their attraction to the radical organization as well. Generally it is important to stress the profound influence of the interlocking social forces of race, class, and gender impacting women's decision to join NJAC.

The Black Power era of the late 1960's was no different from preceding Black Nationalist movements in its global scale. Garvey's UNIA had swept the globe from the

United States and throughout the Caribbean in the 1920's. The Black Power movement of the late 20th century maintained a global character and consciousness-raising among African-descended people intensely influenced those living in the Caribbean under neo-colonial conditions. One woman described the era as a "special period of the awakening of African consciousness globally," where Black people in the Caribbean, United States, and on the African continent were concerned with one another's well being (Interviewee 1, 2005).

The failure of the independence era to drastically alter the situations of working class and impoverished people sparked a discourse that called for Black ownership of the society, not just in terms of skin color but also ideologically. As one interviewee explained:

"The whole thing about Black is Beautiful and so on, in the late 60's impacted on people in the Caribbean at that time. Around that time in the late 60's as well from our point of view is that we were beginning to start questioning our independence" (Interviewee 2, 2005).

This particular interviewee articulated how artistic and cultural manifestations of the Black Power era influenced her decision to join the movement. She specifically mentioned the powerful impact of blues singer Nina Simone and the pervasive change in hairstyle and dress (Interview 2, 2005). Another former member of NJAC explained her reasons for joining as:

"Being conscious and around conscious people. And like then when I was telling you my hair was straightened, then when I realize I shouldn't have straightened my hair" (Interviewee 3, 2005).

Multiple women described an atmosphere charged with a heightened sense of political awareness. One particular member expressed the influence of the critical thought arising from post-independence academics including Lloyd Best, James Millette, and

Walter Rodney (Interviewee 4, 2005). These scholars advocated altering the racial and class structure of Caribbean societies in order for the masses to benefit from the natural resources of their own lands. The most influential Black Power theoretician in the region was Guyanese scholar Walter Rodney.

One interviewee had been a student at the University of West Indies, Mona campus in Jamaica where Rodney held a position as history lecturer. She communicated the profound influence of his work Groundings With My Brothers, and how his being debarred from returning to the island became, “a major eye-opener and major thing for me personally” (Interview 2, 2005). Another NJAC member expresses similar sentiments regarding the impact of Rodney,

“After a meeting with Walter Rodney at a Brooklyn apartment, every night we would meet at different homes and talk, talk, talk....Everybody was making decisions about how you could contribute to the development of your country, the globe, the African development, how, what could you do” (Interview 1, 2005).

Rodney defined Black Power as a cultural, economic, and political movement primarily addressing the issues of cultural denigration and the colonial nature of Caribbean society. Similar to American Black Panther women, female members of NJAC declared their primary allegiances to ending racism and economic exploitation. NJAC women articulated a concern for the pressing problems of “poverty, lack of opportunities, [and] control of their resources and destiny by outside forces” (The Black Woman, 1975; 20). Most important were the ways in which gender shaped the impact of race and class especially in the private sphere. NJAC women recognized the pervasiveness of sexual exploitation and economic subjugation manifesting itself as a result of interlocking systems of oppression. As a “Black Woman” article read:

“When homes break down, as they do often, under the pressures of this slave-like existence, nine times out of ten, it is the woman who is left to scramble for the survival of the children...Many of our women are forced to seek some form of paid employment. Either husband gone and woman left stranded, or husband pay packet too small to make ends meet” (The Black Woman, 1975; 4).

Aside from being drawn to NJAC because of its ideology, another means by which women came to the organization was through ties to college and university campuses. Due to the National Joint Action Committee’s connection with the Sir George Williams Affair and broader student activism, many women joined the movement while attending school. One interviewee described the campus atmosphere and explained, “Students revolted to the fact that our Caribbean people were experiencing racism in Canada” (Interview 2, 2005). Multiple women were attending universities at the time their affiliation with NJAC began and as previously explained many Black Power theoreticians were based on West Indies college campuses.

One particular member joined, not through university ties but came to the organization through a secondary school institution. The daughter of NJAC’s Deputy Chairman had been a high school student at the onset of the Black Power movement and thus, with the assistance of a young female friend, began the youth branch of NJAC known as the National Organization of Revolutionary Students (NORS) (Pasley, 2001).

The co-founder of NORS explained her participation with NJAC as a natural progression from her household background of working-class politics. Her father had always been involved with the trade union movement and as a child she was exposed to a great deal of “critical thinking and new political thinking” (Interviewee 4, 2005). The influence of the household also maintained an impact on another NJAC interviewee. Her father had taken her to see Malcolm X in Harlem and she described her living room as a

place where heated discussions always took place surrounding the state of Black people.

In her own words she clarifies:

““My home, my father had been an early migrant that went to North America. And he was very, very conscious of his Africanness, very much aware of the Garvey movement in America, very much aware of Malcolm X” (Interviewee 1, 2005).

Women’s Roles in NJAC

The roles of women within the National Joint Action Committee, like that of women in the Black Panther Party, changed overtime alongside the orientation of the organization. In terms of leadership and organizational activities, women were integral to the operation of the group as a whole and to the functioning of community activities in particular. While dominant gender ideologies surrounding the position of women in society inadvertently restricted women from formal leadership positions, they still played outstanding roles in consciousness-raising and mobilizing activities of the group. Furthermore, as was previously mentioned, it was two young women that founded the youth branch of NJAC known as the National Organization of Revolutionary Students. Post-1970 the organization split into two factions, one with a Marxist oriented platform, the other a cultural nationalist group, which maintained the NJAC name. As a result of ideological differences, women’s roles in each splinter group differed.

Corresponding to the American Black Panther Party, women holding formal leadership positions within the upper-levels of the NJAC hierarchy were sparse. After the organization’s founding in 1969 and up until 1972 there were no women members on the central committee, the major decision-making body of NJAC. However, outside of the main leadership cadre, as one woman communicated, “there were women who headed

committees. As I say we had these committees all over the country and there were women, some women were head of those committees” (Interview 1, 2005).

One woman member was highly critical of the hierarchical organization of the leadership and felt that decision-making power being concentrated among a small group was inadequate for a movement structure (Interviewee 5, 2005). Her participation with NJAC began after the massive street demonstrations had ended and the organization was entering electoral politics in the late 1970’s and early 1980’s. The disdain for a movement being centered on charismatic leadership is a common sentiment expressed by Black women. Activist Ella Baker consistently advocated for a decentralized form of leadership and decision-making, and therefore broke away from the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in order to help create the grassroots Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee.

The lack of women in formal leadership positions within NJAC may have affected the impact of women within the context of the organization’s broader direction and chosen activities, one woman explains:

“Many occasions where we were engaged in very heated discussions with people like Makandaal and others who represented frontline leadership about what we should be doing. I don’t think, I didn’t think that our [women’s] views were not important but I am almost positive that we would have been confronting the nuances of male domination, the male leadership” (Interviewee 4, 2005).

Outside of leadership and decision-making positions, however, NJAC women played a critical role in allowing the movement to function. The same member continues:

“Even then it could seem that the leadership still appeared to be the domain of the men but I can tell you as happens even now in politics that women were very, very involved in mobilization and organization....Women were very active on the platforms, very visible” (Interviewee 4, 2005).

Every member of the National Joint Action Committee was expected to participate in consciousness-raising activities, attend meetings, and distribute papers as part of their affiliation with the group. One female activist recalled that women comprised a significant number of the marchers involved with the massive street demonstrations of the Black Power movement. Women furthermore played an important role in organizing the protests by typing and distributing pamphlets, as well as, providing food for demonstrators (Pasley, 2001). As a former member explains in her own words:

“We organized rallies, community rallies, we organized communities. We taught, wrote articles for newspapers, we taught, we taught, we taught. Everything we did was about consciousness-raising. I cannot separate that from anything else we did” (Interviewee 1, 2005).

Another woman member communicates comparable sentiments:

“You had to go to meetings, you had to do your mobilization, you had to go into the communities, and sell papers and convince people, like anybody. To the extent that the organization was mobilizing people, right we [women] were very much a part of that” (Interviewee 2, 2005).

The first assignment for one interviewee was to provide support for workers on strike at a company known as FedChem. For about a month she represented the only visible female presence on the campsite, aside from the wives and mothers who arrived to cook and assist their husbands. She read Fanon with and to the workers and held discussions with them in order for them to grasp why their strike for better wages and working conditions challenged the broader system of racism and class oppression (Interviewee 1, 2005). In her own words she explains,

“A lot of our work was consciousness raising work. Similar to the work of Freire we did a lot of utilizing people’s basic needs and wants and issues to raise consciousness. If there were farmers who were dealing with issues of their land we would go and work with them and help them through that issue of how, what to do with their lands. Rights, who had the rights to the land, what, how we wanted to secure it” (Interviewee 1, 2005).

The trade union movement represented an integral component of NJAC's platform and women in the Caribbean, especially those of African and East Indian descent, historically worked outside of the home. The social reality of these women as mothers and laborers manifests itself in their activism within the context of strikes, work stoppages, and the demand for better work conditions and wages. During the year 1975 women's participation in sugar and oil industry strikes were prominently noted. The women, particularly those East Indian women in the sugar industry, played an outstanding role in "keeping morale high, daring the law of the oppressors, and facing up to the brutality of the police" (The Black Woman, 1975).

NJAC's March 24th, 1970 demonstration focused on a specific store due to its treatment of Black women who applied there for jobs (NJAC pamphlet, 1970). Women's experiences within the labor force were marked by exploitation on multiple levels. Places of employment tended to expose women to hazardous work conditions and did not make allowances for pregnancy. Furthermore, wages for women were much lower in comparison to men for the same occupation and Black women were disproportionately employed as low-wage earning domestics (The Black Woman, 1975). One former member explained how NJAC addressed the issue of women's labor:

"We were conscious see of the exploitation of women in the workplace and we would put a lot of emphasis in say the stores where women were employed, so it was exploitation in terms of employment practices and conditions of work for women in certain kinds of industries.... These offshore employment things, sweatshops they used to call them usually around the garment industries. And these things they were not unionized, they existed, so those were our concerns in terms of women and we knew that there was a vast majority of women who had toll in these conditions and who were being exploited" (Interviewee 2, 2005).

Post-1968 the BPP committed itself to addressing the needs of single Black mothers and the same trend arose among women in NJAC. Oppressive social forces

profoundly impacted the private sphere, creating a reality where large numbers of women served as sole providers to their children and households. As a result of this fact, much of the community work generated by NJAC women focused on families and family matters. Women played an especially prominent role in implementing community programs providing supplemental education to youth and disseminating information about women's health. These activities organized by National Joint Action Committee women are the same endeavors with which women in the Black Panther Party involved themselves.

The education of children within the context of their own cultural background stood as a primary concern among NJAC women. The women's arm created coloring books and an entire series of learning materials for children centered on African and Indian culture. Many women members had been or were teachers and an auxiliary summer school was created in order for children to learn about their history from their own cultural perspective (Interviewee 1, 2005). As one woman describes,

“We ran some education programs started something called Saturday school for little children....I was a teacher, I was teaching secondary school at the time and so we brought together children at various ages, primary school early secondary, you know through 14-15 and so. Seek to educate them in a more holistic way, intended to build community among these children” (Interviewee 2, 2005).

Members furthermore expressed concern for the healthcare system of Trinidad and Tobago, which one interviewee described as inadequate in providing women with a working knowledge of their bodies. In response to this insufficiency a community program was created involving workshops and the production of pamphlets regarding women's reproductive health for dissemination among community members.

“We translated important health information for women in to their own language. And in doing so we got the women themselves to do it. So we, workshopped the issues of

contraception, workshopped issues of fibroids, workshop issues of breast cancer, workshop issues of spacing your children and so on..... We felt a woman should know what her body does, how it functions, she should make the decision of how many children she wants to have based on her own economic and social circumstances and she should then manage that process... We shouldn't be duped into family planning or just go along with it because you hear something about it" (Interviewee 1, 2005).

Another outstanding impetus in NJAC arising directly from women members was the creation of NORS. Two young teenage women founded the National Organization of Revolutionary Students, a subdivision of NJAC that organized secondary school students throughout the island. One of the key campaigns undertaken by NORS became the mobilization against the soldiers who had been detained and charged with mutiny for their role in the 1970 uprising. In a previously conducted interview the co-founder explains,

"The period of political awareness, and mobilization for change we sort of catapulted it into for want of a better expression leadership positions. A lot of our work apart from NJAC and the meetings on the blocks was the work we did in secondary schools in particular across the country and that's a period of history that's not really well recorded and its amazing" (Interviewee 4, 2005).

Following the State of Emergency, another offshoot of the Nation Joint Action Committee came to fruition, the Marxist-oriented, guerilla warfare faction known as the National Union of Freedom Fighters (NUFF). This group did not express a working ideology of gender roles in practice. On May 21, 1972 the group launched a raid on the Texaco Estate Police Station, thus beginning its guerilla warfare activities. According to Pasley (2001), women maintained equal footing with the men and completed the same tasks including camping out, tracking, and utilizing weapons. In fact, more traditional tasks associated with women such as cooking and caring were equally shared between the women and men. One NUFF fighter claimed:

“I used to feel good seeing that women being a part of it. They used to feel good about themselves...they could’ve really prowl, as we’d say, they could really climb those hills and you know they were not a keep back—to say like it’s women and we’ll have to wait for them, in fact, they could’ve prowl, as we’d say when we’re on the march, longer distances than some of the guys”(Pasley, 2001).

On the contrary, NJAC continued to operate, but changed its orientation to that of a cultural nationalist organization. The creation of the women’s arm within the National Joint Action Committee arose at this time, when NJAC was transforming its platform and focus. The substantially large number of women involved caused the central committee, to create a women’s branch of the group in 1971.

Cultural Black Nationalism tends to more strongly portray women’s place as being in the home and men’s position in the larger public sphere working on political issues and financially caring for the private sphere. The women’s committee in NJAC primarily involved itself with domestic issues such as child-rearing, cooking, and caring for the home. One woman speaking of this subdivision claims:

“We used to have like meetings with the heads, then we would have harambee, a black tradition in the arts. We used to have a whole day session like a Sunday they bring all the different areas together and they have these all day sessions and Makandaal Dagaar, the leader he used to be you know talking about things in the society..... In the women’s group we had a sister from Africa teaching us to cook African meals you know so we were exchanging ideas and putting, being creative for your family on the whole ” (Interviewee 3, 2005).

The magazine produced by the women’s branch entitled “The Black Woman” exemplifies the reification of gender roles within NJAC following its transformation into a cultural nationalist group. Articles found in the publications included titles such as, “Reach Out and Be At Home,” “So You are Going to Have a Baby,” and “Let the Children Talk and Learn,” among others. One article published in the Black Woman explicitly articulated the notion of gender roles as being grounded in African culture. The

woman maintained a large portion of responsibility for maintaining and nurturing the family. The article read:

“The question of roles is very important in an understanding of the African way of life. Within the African family, roles were very clearly defined. The man had his role, the woman had hers. The upbringing of children was largely the responsibility of the woman because children lived in their mothers hut” (The Black Woman, 1975).

It is, however, important to note that even in the arena of child-rearing, women found a means to resist. One NJAC mother, who had been married by the organization, recalls an example where domestic roles were utilized as a means of opposition to domination in the public sphere:

“Sometime they didn’t want canerows in your hair. And at that time people were canerowing and wearing the natural hair, the afro and people were kind of threatened by it because of the 1970..... well one of the things the woman decided let us put it more in our children’s hair. So if they say they don’t like the style today we do a variation the next day... You understand until eventually they stopped cause they used to give them problem for their hairstyle” (Interviewee 3, 2005).

This same member discussed how NJAC stressed sharing in terms of family and household responsibilities. Therefore, it would stand that gender roles were not necessarily as rigid as one would think. In addition to this, roles were theoretically given equal weight without a hierarchy being created between women’s domestic work in the private sphere and activities pursued by men in the public sphere. While a woman’s place was raising children and taking care of the home, roles could be interchangeable. Another member expressed the same sentiments in her interview and described a situation where she would attend school while her husband would care for the children (Interviewee 1, 2005).

Response to Sexism in NJAC

The existence of sexism within the organization, like that within the context of the Black Panther Party is complex because while women were highly respected as part of the struggle they were also expected to fulfill traditional gender roles as women, especially during the cultural nationalist era of NJAC. While Black women have long played a particularly prominent role in their communities and families within Trinidadian society, the fact remains that few women maintained decision-making power or held formal leadership positions within the organizational hierarchy.

The existence of sexism within NJAC was not reported to be as blatant and outright in comparison to the American Black Power organization. One former woman member felt that both women and men were treated equally (Interviewee 3, 2005). Another member recognized that chauvinism existed, but contended it was not ubiquitous enough to stand out in her mind (Interviewee 4, 2005). A third woman participant in NJAC believed that, regardless of rank, a woman's position in the movement remained unquestioned. She explains:

“Women in the Caribbean and in Trinidad and Tobago, on the whole, have always played a very prominent role both in their homes and in their communities...I think women are respected on the struggle line as being as you know as fearless as men and you know there's a, I just think women are equal partners in the struggle” (Interviewee 1).

This would seem to be a historical fact. Multiple publications from the Black Power era reference and show reverence to Daisy Crick Nelson, a highly active member of the 1937 Butler movement. This woman of African-descent was well respected for her role in leading an oil strike at the Apex Oilfields and a hunger march into the Port of Spain (The Black Woman, 1975). Furthermore, the group's leadership stressed respect

for women and publicly rejected the sexual exploitation of women's bodies (Pasley, 2001).

Another prominent member articulates the subconscious operation of gender roles manifesting themselves within the context of the National Joint Action Committee:

"I think from the NJAC experience to be very honest in retrospect the baggage of the way we've been socialized would have been there with men and women but I think that there was a conscious effort to not pigeon hole men in that particular role. It's not something that I think was outstanding..... I'm sure that we had good banter about it like excuse me you can go get your own tea....the power of the movement and the level of consciousness at the time would not wipe away in one swoop all these kinds of conditioned responses of men and women" (Interviewee 4, 2005).

CHAPTER VII

DISCUSSIONS & CONCLUSIONS

The Black Power era represents a critical juncture in the discourse between black women and men in both the Caribbean and United States. Unresolved issues of emasculation, black manhood, and the defeminization of black women came to the fore during the late 1960's. Women's experiences in both the Black Panther Party and National Joint Action Committee were directly linked to the social construction of gender roles and dominant ideologies regarding the status of women in the public and private sphere. While the movements sought to address broader issues of racial discrimination and economic exploitation, they failed to grasp the impact of Western patriarchy and the interconnectedness of gender oppression affecting the black communities.

Experiences of Racism, Classism, and Sexism

Parallel constructions of race, class, and gender forces contributed to the great similarities found between women's experiences and roles in the American and Trinidadian Black Power movements. These resemblances speak to the comparable social structural position of black women in both regions of the African Diaspora. In the two countries, women of color are relegated to the lowest rung of the economic ladder and disproportionately suffer from ties between racial discrimination and the capitalist economic system. Within a racialized and genderized labor market, black women are overrepresented in the lowest-level, lowest-paying domestic and service sector positions.

Even when black women are employed in similar occupational positions, they are paid less in comparison to their male counterparts.

Among African-descended women in the Diaspora, there exists a common reality shaped by the racial divisions in wealth and resources. In Trinidad the National Joint Action Committee challenged a black government, but described its leaders as “Afro-Saxons,” or Africans with Western values. This reflects the institutionalized nature of racism that hierarchically organizes the allocation of society’s resources. The Black Panthers focused on recruiting the often unemployed lumpenproletariat underclass and expanded Marx’s definition to include single black mothers working to sustain their families. On the other hand, NJAC was primarily comprised of working and middle-class college students, who recognized the struggle of single black women as well. The reality of the single female-headed household in African-descended communities does not fit the traditional Western family model and is often deemed as dysfunctional. However, this research argues that the pervasiveness of the single-female headed household may in part result from ties between capitalist exploitation and racial discrimination profoundly impacting the structure of black families.

The enveloping oppression of black people globally pushed women to join the Black Panther Party and National Joint Action Committee, regardless of their own personal class background. The similar experiences of women in both organizations speak to both the existence of racial discrimination within the societies, as well as, a consistent gender ideology based on Western patriarchal thinking. The patriarchal negotiation taking place in America and Trinidad impacted social norms dictating the proper behavior of women within the context of the society and the movement. An

important distinction must be made, however, between the racism experienced by black people living in America and the Caribbean.

In the United States, due to the minority status of African-descended people, racism manifests itself differently. Throughout the Diaspora, Africans live as a culturally denigrated people, the ideology behind which is practiced in education, the media, and employment. The systematic impact of racism is felt more deeply and maintains a greater psychological impact among African-Americans. Blacks in America are subject to the phenomenon of a pervasive racist violence associated with their minority status. Audre Lourde explains in 1995:

“Black women and our children, know the fabric of our lives is stitched with violence and hatred, that there is no rest. We do not deal with it only on the picket lines, or in dark midnight alleys, or in the places where we dare to verbalize our resistance. For us, increasingly violence weaves through the daily tissues of our living” (288)

This reality might speak to why sexism is not reported to be as pervasive in the experiences of NJAC women compared to women in the Black Panther Party. First, according to Black Feminism, gender is strongly tied to the social forces of race and class. Furthermore, due to the minority status of blacks in America, white supremacist capitalist patriarchal ideologies are more deeply engrained and maintain a greater influence on community relations among black women and men. While many of the autobiographical accounts of Panther women attest to an atmosphere of invasive sexism, interviews with NJAC women do not tell the same story. The majority of the women interviewed claimed sexism was not an issue and relationships between NJAC men and women were equal.

This particular finding may also be attributed to the basis on which women felt they did or did not perceive sexism and how NJAC women formulated a definition of

sexism. For example, there were multiple instances of unwanted sexual advances from Panther men reported among BPP women. The request for women's capitulation to sex was unfounded in the research surrounding the women of NJAC. The lack of blatant, overt sexism explicitly tied to gender among NJAC interviewees may in part, explain why the perception of sexism in the organization was less in comparison to Panther women.

The research shows that ideologies about strategies and tactics within a social movement influence the patriarchal negotiation, shaping sexism within an organization, gender roles, and the position of women participants. Franz Fanon discussed the impact of the armed Algerian liberation struggle in challenging and changing traditional gender relationships and socially defined codes of behavior for women (Fanon, 1967). The Black Panther Party was in direct confrontation with a white-dominated police force, media, and government that pursued a policy of repression against the organization. As mentioned in Chapter 5, this violent repression initiated a change in the Party's approach to the roles of women. Chapter 6 describes the similar situation presented by the NJAC offshoot NUFF. In this branch, women filled traditionally masculine roles during guerilla warfare and the men engaged in feminine roles such as cooking and cleaning at the camps.

On the other hand, cultural nationalist movements tend to reify traditional gender roles and claim African tradition required women to play a primary role in the household raising children and caring for their families. However, this is a partially false representation of African culture that is in direct opposition to the operation of a capitalist patriarchal society. Within the context of pre-colonial African culture, women's

prominent roles in the home were intertwined with an entire economic and political system affording them social power, a true matriarchal structure (Amadiume, 1997). As the research has shown black women in the Caribbean and United States have not been afforded the same economic and political power, hence the “myth of matriarchy.” The relegation of women of color in the lowest-paying, lowest-level occupational positions evidence this fact.

Womanhood, Motherhood, & Leadership

The shape of black women’s activism in both regions was influenced by the social role of mother and mothering practices created during the antebellum era. As Davis (1995) explains, the domestic sphere for black women expands into a broad range of kin and community relations beyond the nuclear family. Hurtado (1989) reaffirms this notion and claims there is no bifurcation between the public and private sphere for women of color. Black women’s labor in the public sphere, especially that of single mothers, is most often directly tied to the sustenance and maintenance of their families in the private sphere. Women in both the Black Panther Party and National Joint Action Committee expressed concern for the conditions of women at work including allowances for pregnancy, hazardous environments, and low-wages.

Although feminist literature in the United States never explicitly utilizes the term, the black community in America is matrifocal in nature, like that of the Caribbean. This reality explains the tendency of black women to prefer and excel at grassroots organizing. With social networks already in place, black women maintained the ability to disseminate information and organize collective action effectively. The sale of newspapers and leading community discussions stands as two primary examples. Although academic

literature tends to focus on the decision-making and formal leadership positions of a social movement, one must ask the question as to how people actually end up “in the streets,” so to speak. While leaders make decisions, there must be a body politic ready to carry those orders into action.

As a result of similar socio-structural positions, women in both regions participating in the movements championed similar concerns and most, if not all, were tied to their role as mothers and family caretakers. In her autobiography, Afeni Shakur claimed that she participated in programs initiated by the Party, because they would have helped her single mother raise children on a meager income (Guy & Shakur, 2004). Healthcare, education, and childcare stand out as the primary issues around which black women directed their community organizing activities. Because black communities in both the Caribbean and United States suffer from the reality of the absentee male discussed further in Chapter 3, the creation of support networks becomes necessary for the survival and sustenance of black families. The programs initiated and sustained by NJAC and BPP women fulfilled this need.

Due to internal and external forces, the perception of women’s roles and statuses within the organizations underwent prolific changes. The attrition of male leadership and sexual equality of harsh government repression caused women to begin entering into formal leadership positions with decision-making power. These external forces, alongside the posturing of women in response to male chauvinism, served to renegotiate the patriarchal contracts of the Black Panther Party and National Joint Action Committee. Especially in the BPP, women began to adopt more prominent positions within the organizational hierarchy.

Even within the context of these formal leadership positions, it is apparent that they continued to champion causes tied to the social role of mother. For example, one perspective claims that community programs of the Black Panther Party became more efficient after the Party centralized under Elaine Brown's leadership (Brown, 1996). The Women's Arm of NJAC pursued educational programs for youth and healthcare initiatives for women in the community. This finding supports Hudson-Weems (1995) assertion that black women's activism places the concerns of family and children first. Due to their unique social-structural position shaped by the simultaneous operation of race, class, and gender forces, black women's realities combine both the public and private sphere. As Patricia Hill-Collins (1990) wrote, the families of black women are impacted by political, economic, and social institutions. This reality is reflected in their exercise of leadership within the organizational context.

Prevailing Gender Ideologies:

African-American Gender Ideologies

The general societal attitude towards the proper behavior of women in the public realm was influenced by accepted gender roles in the private sphere. Social constructions placed females within the domestic sphere, while the public sphere belonged to men who represented the protectors and providers of their families. Man's role was conceived of as being at the head of the family, the primary breadwinner and decision-maker within the household. Women were to walk "two steps" behind, their sole purpose raising children and attending to their husbands needs (Cone, 1991). Francis Beal (1995) contextualized black male chauvinism arguing that in a capitalist society a real man possessed material wealth and a real woman fulfilled an entirely sexual role. In the patriarchal logic,

toughness, hard work, and being unemotional represent characteristics associated with masculinity. Femininity, on the other hand, is tied to gentleness, fragility, and a nurturing attitude (Blood, Tuttle, & Lakey, 2000; Kokopeli & Lakey, 2000).

In America, two noteworthy events intensely impacted gender relations within the black community: the 1965 Moynihan Report and the notoriety of Nation of Islam leader Malcolm X. It can be argued that ideologies emanating from these sources were a result of Western capitalist patriarchal thinking influencing the Caribbean region as well. In 1965 New York Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan published his self-titled report addressing “The Negro Problem,” a treatise on the black community in the post-Civil Rights era. After surveying the historical realities of racism, Moynihan painted the stereotypical image of black women as matriarchs: strong, domineering figures responsible for the social ills existing among black people. According to the Senator, the black communities’ “matriarchal structure” impeded, “the progress of the group as a whole and imposes a crushing burden on the Negro male” (Abu-Jamal, 240). One perspective claims this report sparked open debate about gender roles, and African-descended women were overtly blamed in public discourse for the morally and economically impoverished state of black America (Springer, 2005).

The Moynihan report perpetuated the “matriarchal myth” persisting since slavery and applied dominant conceptions of white womanhood in analyzing the black community. The Senator neglected to recognize the economic reality of black women forced to labor outside of the home for the sustenance of their families. Historically and in contemporary times, the socially constructed masculine role of breadwinner and feminine role of housewife persists as an unfulfilled phenomenon among African people

in both the Caribbean and United States. Due to the connection between race and class forces, not a culturally engrained flaw, black women have long played the multiple roles of mother, family caretaker, and laborer. As mentioned in Chapter 3, black women's work left them ideologically unable to achieve the bourgeois notion of white womanhood to which many Black Power leaders aspired during the late 1960's.

One prominent leader in particular, Malcolm X symbolized the prototype for Black manhood in America; in the words of Wallace (1978) he signified the "supreme black patriarch" (37). According to Newton (2005) he embodied a more rebellious and confrontational masculine ideal compared to Civil Rights leaders imploring for integration. The organization to which Malcolm belonged, the Nation of Islam, accepted the dominant gender ideology that women's place was in the home (Cone, 1991). In his interpretation of Black Muslim teachings Malcolm oftentimes used the terms respect, protect, love, and control in order to describe acceptable relationships between men and women. According to the NOI minister man's true nature was to be strong and a woman's was to be weak, in the words of Malcolm, "men must control women to gain respect" (Cone, 1991). Chapter 5 discusses the close connections between Malcolm, the NOI, and the Black Panther Party.

Omnipresent ideologies of gender, fueled by the Moynihan Report and reflected in the rhetoric of Malcolm X, manifested in the conceptualization of men's and women's roles in the Black Power movement. As the movement sought to create a new definition for blackness, a highly influential idea became black male assertiveness. In the introduction to Eldridge Cleaver's Soul on Ice, Ishmael Reed wrote, "Manhood was very much on the minds of black men during the 1960's" (Cleaver, ii). During slavery, black

men were not allowed to be “men” in the sense of heading households and making decisions. Black men were “boys” in the ideology of the power structure and this syndrome fueled the system of segregation following legal slavery (hooks, 1981). The sexual exploitation of African-American women during the antebellum era and following manumission further undermined the morale of the black community and fueled black male emasculation (White, 2001).

Within the context of the Black Power movement the exercise of authority and reclaiming of black manhood often inadvertently took the form of patriarchal domination, sexual prowess, and aggressive behavior (Wallace, 1978). The display of arms by the Black Panther Party became dependant upon the “Black Macho” image, “a male chauvinist that was frequently cruel, narcissistic, and short-sighted” (Wallace, 73). The behavior of some men in the Black Power movement reflected the patriarchal notion that love and respect can only be met by being masculine, powerful, and ultimately violent (Kokopeli and Lakey, 2000). Huey Newton wrote, “He [black men] always wanted to be able to decide to gain respect from his woman. Because women want one to control” (Foner, 59) This perspective is discussed in Chapter 5 and is reflected by the various encounters experienced by Panther women involving abrasive language, sexual advances, and abuses of authority involving Party men.

Huey Newton and other militant men believed the black man did not feel like a man and was viewed as worthless by a family for which, he could not provide. Buying into the matriarchal myth, a widespread belief during the era argued the “economic privilege” of black women allowed them to devalue, disrespect, and dominate black men at the expense of their manhood (Abu-Jamal, 2004). Many black militant men adhered to

myths faulting black women for black male oppression (Beale, 1995). Hidden beneath the social construction of black women as matriarchs lay the dangerous assumption that black women escaped persecution from society and even contributed to the emasculation of black men by virtue of their “privileged” economic position (Beale, 1995). Chapter 3 provides an in-depth discussion of strained relationships between black women and men due to issues of class.

As Dr. Jeanne Noble observed, black men wished to take the lead in determining the direction and structure of black communities and families (Murray, 1995). The research suggests that the lack of black women in formal leadership positions may be attributed to both the myth of matriarchy and black male emasculation (Roth, 1995). Within the organizational context, decision-making power and authority over other members contributed to the attainment of black manhood and constructions of masculinity. Implicit in the myth of matriarchy is the notion that black females must be subordinated in order to heal wounds of emasculation, which they helped create. Kathleen Cleaver (1971) explained that a woman’s suggestion might not have been implemented because, “the fact that the suggestion came from a woman gave it a lesser value” (55-56). At times women, disturbed by the myth of the domineering, emasculating female may have felt the need to step aside and allow men to control (Roth, 1995; Taylor, 1998).

However, it is important to not completely dismiss and demonize the issue of black manhood and black male assertiveness manifesting itself in Nationalist movements of the era. Black women in the late 1960’s were very proud of the black men who stood

up against social forces of oppression. (Hudson-Weems, 1995) As a group of Panther women explains:

“Our men have been sort of castrated you know. The responsibilities that they rightfully should have had before, were taken away from—to take away their manhood. We’ve had to fight all this before. Our men are constantly thinking or saying that maybe if we assume a heavier role, a more responsible role... it’s such a touchy thing, that we have to be very sure that the roles are evenly divided.” (Panther Sisters on Liberation, 1969)

Additionally, and equally complex, black women traditionally place the interests of the community and family first. Therefore, the promotion of the male as a leader and protector may not simply refer to patriarchal thinking (Hudson-Weems, 1995). However, the fine line exists between protection and leadership on one hand and the abuse of authority operating in a way that constrains an individual’s choices on the other.

Caribbean Gender Ideologies

The dearth of literature surrounding the Trinidadian Black Power era and the gender ideology of the time, as well as, the lack of collected information regarding women in the National Joint Action Committee complicates the researchers ability to provide a balanced assessment of women’s experiences and roles in the movement. However, the interviews implicitly reveal the notion that gender roles in Trinidad and Tobago were similar to that of the United States. Women were tied to the home and private sphere, while men’s position was cast as being in the public sphere working on political, social, and economic affairs. As explained in Chapter 6, during the FedChem strikes the only visible female force at the camp were the wives and mothers who arrived to cook and care for their husbands and sons. Furthermore, the women cooked and tended

to children during the various ceremonies sponsored by the National Joint Action Committee (Interviewee 3, 2005; Interviewee 2, 2005). One NJAC woman recalls:

“There are notions of what a young woman is supposed to be right? Especially young educated woman and therefore there is a part you must go to. And certainly you have to and I think this is part of our tradition that you have to be the light of your family... I was also staying out late in the night, in the same Laventille are you know, holding meetings with some men who not up to my quality under a streetlamp and invariably there might be more men than woman. And coming home midnight, in the night and so on what kind of woman is that? So you know strangely enough I said you know it didn't matter, but you know my womanhood, my sense of womanhood was that” (Interviewee 2, 2005).

This quote also speaks to the notion that family responsibilities and economic concerns may have created constraints on black women's leadership. This same member continued by describing the impact of the larger, overarching theme that men should protect women movement participants also found in the United States. In her own words she explains:

“There was an overriding theme that the men took care of women...even though the practice did not always work out in that way and even though that hurt women at times because it smelled of a particular I am higher than you” (Interviewee 2, 2006).

Although it remains a sorely under-explored area of social science emanating from the region, similar conceptions of masculinity present in America are found in the Caribbean. The research suggests this phenomenon may be attributed to the similar operation of capitalist economic organization and its ties to patriarchy. Speaking specifically of Trinidad, Lewis (1998) argues there exists the concept of a male breadwinner, “an important but always contested notion of masculinity” (168). Sexual prowess also represents another aspect of manhood. Parallel to the United States, “masculinity and male bonding are predicated on a notion of conquest in which man is the proverbial hunter and woman the hunted” (Lewis, 170). Finally physicality, violence,

and “warriorhood,” also referred to as a demonstration of resistance are inextricably bound to conceptions of manhood (Lewis, 1998).

Victoria Pasley (2001) argues there exist important similarities between women’s experiences in NJAC and that of women in the American Black Power movement. Comparable to the Black Panther Party, NJAC advocates utilized the language of regaining black manhood in recruitment and mobilization efforts. Multiple pamphlets and newspaper articles cast the Black Power struggle as an effort to heal wounds of emasculation created by a history of slavery, colonialism, and neo-colonialism. Discussions of emasculation and black manhood inadvertently served to hinder the organizing practices of women in Trinidad as well. Pasley (2001) concludes in her research, “ when NJAC held community discussions in depressed areas, women usually did not attend, even though women activists, sent by NJAC, would sometimes lead discussions. This is perhaps because many women still considered political ideology as a male domain” (5). In addition, there existed the same lack of women in formal leadership positions within the organizational hierarchy of the National Joint Action Committee.

It is important to recognize, however, the use of masculine language and overarching call for Black manhood is not necessarily a cut and dry issue. An article published by NJAC in “The East Dry River Speaks,” implored of women:

“Is it that we’re too coward to fight for our rights or do we think that to be feminine means to be passive—bullshit. Why shouldn’t we stand side by side with out Brothers and show them that the fight also belongs to us, and that we are willing to level the earth according to Eldridge Cleaver in our attempts to gain our manhood” (pg).

The phenomenon of women referring to themselves as men is observable among women in the Black Panther Party as well. Take for instance the conclusion of a poem written by Elaine Brown: “That the silence will end/ We’ll just have to get guns and/ Be men”

(Courtright, 1974) Brown, former party member Kathleen Cleaver, and the author of the NJAC article assumed a male persona when urging the need for revolutionary action (Jennings, 1998). These instances reference the intrinsic role of maleness in resistance movements and evidence the complexity of sexism alongside the unintentional power of gender roles and customs (Ogbar, 2004). For these Black Power women, the definition of masculinity and manhood indicates a specific behavior, a willingness to be revolutionary as opposed to strict gender identification (Jennings, 1998). Despite popular representations, the mantra of manhood transcended gender and women frequently used the term to refer to all people engaging in revolutionary action (Ogbar, 2004).

East Indian Women

Research surrounding Caribbean gender ideologies maintain a primarily Afrocentric focus. Understanding the construction of gender roles and relationships between East Indian men and women would aide in better understanding the role of East Indian women in the Black Power movement, a largely urban, African phenomenon. This remains one area of the Black Power movement that has been sorely neglected and much research is required in order to adequately address their particular experiences. Women of East Indian descent maintain their own distinct social standing and played prominent roles in the movement in their own right. One interviewee of African-descent explained her perception of women in East Indian culture:

“In the Indian culture women don’t have much space. In the sense that is a male-dominated culture, different from African culture. African culture women have their own space, women have their own houses, they run the market....East Indian culture on the other hand keeps does indeed keep women subordinate, women do not indeed have spaces of their own and the Black Power movement because it was transforming the entire society telling everyone that you have a voice, that you have a right to have a voice it is that right to have a voice infected the East Indian women as well. So they wanted

their voices to be heard, that is what I mean by they then demanded and declared and took their spaces” (Interviewee 1, 2005).

When the state of emergency was declared, the leader of NJAC Makandaal Dagaar was found hiding in Caroni, a predominately East Indian area of Trinidad. For two days Indian women cooked and cared for him, protecting him from the police forces that were seeking his arrest (Interviewee 4, 2005). Due to the fact they represented a large portion of the laborers, Indian women were prominent in the sugar-cane movement as well. One interviewee recalled an elderly woman in particular:

“I know that she has been eulogized by the sugar movement, an elderly woman, probably in her forties and fifties. Such an activist, such a dynamic woman. When it was a threat of Panday concessions they were not in agreement with she went down on her hands at Orange Grove and bit the grass with, pulled it up with her teeth and said over her dead body would sugar workers capitulate” (Interviewee 4, 2005).

Further Research

There remains much research to be completed regarding the prominent role of women in social movements generally and movements for black liberation specifically. This thesis covers only a small portion of the myriad experiences and roles of women in the Black Panther Party and National Joint Action Committee that linger invisible in the annals of history. The literature surrounding social movements must redirect its focus away from charismatic male leadership in order to uncover the integral roles played by women. Feminist literature must begin to branch out and focus on movements not particularly addressing women’s issues in order to understand the interconnectedness between gender and other social forces.

The impact of sexism on the black community and how it is negotiated also stands as an important area of research. Although this thesis focused on the influence of gender

in the Black Power movement, the operation of gender roles and the social construction of femininity and masculinity stand as sorely understudied aspects of black life in general. How can black men heal wounds of emasculation without subjugating black women in the process? What is an adequate model, properly representing the reality of the black family structure within the context of a capitalist Western patriarchal society? How do black women perceive, formulate a definition of, and respond to sexism from black men? These are important questions that can aid in understanding the impact of Western patriarchy on relationships between black women and men.

The interconnectedness of race, class, and gender produce triple constraints within the context of black women's lives. In spite of these odds they continue to raise families, sustain communities, and resist pervasive exploitation impacting all aspects of their daily experiences. The Black Power movement failed to recognize that addressing the issue of gender is an essential component to any liberation movement because it requires the reorganization of relationships within the private sphere impacting the larger public sphere (hooks, 1991). Alleviating the oppression of black women entails the dismantling of all systems of oppression including sexism, racism, and classism. In the words of Amy Jacques Garvey, "Ethiopia's queens will reign again, and her Amazons protect her shores and people. Strengthen your shaking knees, and move forward, or we will displace you and lead on to victory and to glory" (94).

REFERENCES

“15 Black Power Leaders Held and Sent to Nelson Island” *Special Express Independence Magazine* 30 August 1970

Abbott, Andrew. “Conceptions of Time and Events in Social Science Methods: Casual and Narrative Approaches”. *Historical Methods*, 23 (1990) pp. 140-150

Abbott, Andrew. “From Causes to Events: Notes on Narrative Positivism”. *Sociological Methods and Research*, 20 (1992) pp. 428-455

Abel Thomas. Why Hitler Came into Power. Cambridge: Harvard University Press (1986)

Abu-Jamal, Mumia. We Want Freedom: A Life in the Black Panther Party. Cambridge: South End Press (2004)

Adeleke, Tunde. “Black Americans and Africa: A Critique of the Pan-African and Identity Paradigms”. *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, Vol. 31, No. 3 (1998) pp. 505-536

Amadiume, Ife Reinventing Africa: Matriarchy, Religion, and Culture. Zed Books Ltd: New York. 1997.

Aminzade, Ronald. “Historical Sociology and Time”. *Sociological Methods and Research*, 20 (1992) pp. 456-480

Amnizade, Ron; Goldstone, Jack; McAdam, Doug; Perry, Elizabeth; Sewell, William; Tarrow, Sidney; Tilly, Charles. Silence and Voice in the Study of Contentious Politics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (Forthcoming)

Anderson, Kathryn; Armitage, Susan; Jack, Dana; Wittner, Judith. “Beginning Where We Are: Feminist Methodology in Oral History”. Taken From: Feminist Research Methods: Exemplary Readings in the Social Sciences ed. Joyce Mc Carl Nielsen. Boulder: Westview Press (1990)

“Armed Black Brothers in Richmond Community”. *The Black Panther* 25 April 1967: 3+
Baksh-Sooden, Rawwida. “Issues of Difference in Contemporary Caribbean Feminism”. *Feminist Review*. Number 59, Summer 1998. (pp.74-85)

Balagoon, Kuwasi et. al. Look for me in the whirlwind: the collective autobiography of the New York 21 New York: Random House (1971)

Barbara Easley Interview. Taken From: "Black Panthers Today", PBS Website "A Panther in Africa" by Aaron Matthews. (2004)
http://www.pbs.org/pov/pov2004/apantherinafrica/special_today_easley.html

Bartholomew, Gloria. "A Black Woman's Thoughts" *The Black Panther* 28 September 1968: 11 +

Bate, B. Communication and the Sexes. New York: Harper & Row (1988)

Beale, Frances, "Double Jeopardy: To Be Black and Female" Taken From: Words of Fire: An Anthology of African-American Feminist Thought ed. Beverly Guy-Sheftall. New York: The New Press (1995)

Beckles, Hilary McD. "Historicizing Slavery in West Indian Feminisms". *Feminist Review*. Number 59, Summer (1998) pp. 34-56)

Belgrave, Valerie. "The Sir George Williams Affair". Taken From: The Black Power Revolution 1970: a Retrospective. ed. Selwyn Ryan and Taimoon Stewart. St. Augustine, Trinidad: University of the West Indies (1995)

Benston, Kimberly. Performing Blackness: Enactments of African-American Modernism. Routledge: New York (2000)

Berg, Bruce. Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences Second Ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon (1995)

"Black Power March to San Juan: 14,000 at Croisee Meeting". *Trinidad Express* 7 March 1970: 1+

Bertaux, Daniel. Biography and Society: The Life-History Approach in the Social Sciences. London: Sage Publications (1981)

Bertaux, Daniel. "Oral History Approaches to an International Social Movement". Taken From: Comparative Methodology: Theory and Practice in International Social Research. Ed. Else Oyen. Newbury Park: Sage Publications (1990)

Bertaux, Daniel & Kohli, Martin. "The Life Story Approach: A Continental View". *Annual Review of Sociology*, 10 (1984) pp. 149-167

"Black Woman" by A Black Revolutionary *The Black Panther* 14 September 1968: 6+

Blood, Peter; Tuttle, Alan; Lakey, George "Understanding and Fighting Sexism: A Call to Men" Taken From Race, Class, and Gender an Anthology ed. Margaret L. Anderson, Patricia Hill Collins. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Thompson (2000)

Bluestone, Barry and Harrison, Bennett. The Deindustrialization of America: plant closings, community abandonment and the dismantling of basic industry. New York: Basic Books (1982)

Boger, John Charles and Wegner, Judith Welch. Race, Poverty, and American Cities. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press (1996)

Broadkin Sacks, Karen. "How the Jews Became White". Taken From: Race, Class, and Gender in the United States ed. Paula S. Rothenberg. New York: St. Martins Press (1998)

Brown, Angela. "Women and the Black Panther Party." *Socialist Review*, Vol. 26, No. 1-2 (1996)

Brown, Elaine. A Taste of Power: A Black Woman's Story. Doubleday: New York (1994)

Cable, Sherry. "Women's Social Movement Involvement: The Role of Structural Availability in Recruitment and Participation Processes". *Sociological Quarterly* No. 33, 1991 (pp. 35-50)

Calhoun, Craig. Critical Social Theory: Culture, History, and the Challenge of Difference. Oxford: Blackwell (1995)

Carmichael, Stokely; Hamilton, Charles. Black Power: The Politics of Liberation. (1992)

Chioma, Filomina. The Black Woman Cross-Culturally. Cambridge: Schenkman Publishing Co (1981)

Clark, Joanna. "Motherhood". Taken From: The Black Woman Anthology ed. Toni Cade. New York: New American Library (1970)

Cleaver, Eldridge. Soul on Ice. McGraw Hill: New York (1968)

Codallos, Bob. "The Long March: Black Power Goes to Caroni". *The Trinidad Express* 13 March 1970: 13+

Coffey, A. & Atkinson, P. Making Sense of Qualitative Data Analysis: Complementary Strategies. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications. (1996)

Combahee River Collective. "A Black Feminist Statement." Taken From: Words of Fire: An Anthology of African-American Feminist Thought ed. Beverly Guy-Sheftall. New York: The New Press (1995)

Cone, James Martin and Malcolm and America: A Dream or Nightmare Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books (1991)

“Conventional Politics or Revolution”. NJAC Pamphlet. University of West Indies, St. Augustine (1970)

Courtright, John A. “Rhetoric of the Gun: An Analysis of Rhetorical Modifications of the Black Panther Party”. *Journal of Black Studies* Vol. 4, No. 3 (March 1974) pp. 249-267

Crenshaw, Kimberle. “The Intersection of Race and Gender”. Taken from: Critical Race Theory, ed. Kimberle Crenshaw, et. al. New York: The New Press (1995) pp. 357-383

Curtis IV, Edward E. Islam in Black America: Identity, Liberation, and Difference in African-American Islamic Thought. State University of New York Press: Albany, NY (2002)

Davis, Angela. Angela Davis—An Autobiography. New York: Random House (1974)

Davis, Angela. “Reflections on the Black Woman’s Role in the Community of Slaves”. Taken From: Words of Fire: An Anthology of African-American Feminist Thought ed. Beverly Guy-Sheftall. New York: The New Press (1995)

Ellis, Pat. Women of the Caribbean. London: Zed Books Ltd. (1986)

Evans, Sara. Personal Politics. New York: Vintage (1980)

Fanon, Frantz. The Wretched of the Earth. New York: Grove Press (1963)

Foster, V. Eudine Barriteau. “The Construct of Postmodernist Feminist Theory for Caribbean Social Science Research”. *Social & Economic Studies*. Vol. 41, No. 2 1992

Foner, Philip S. The Black Panthers Speak. De Capo Press (2002)

Fonow, Mary Margaret. “Protest Engendered: The Participation of Women Steelworkers in the Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel Strike of 1985”. *Gender & Society* 12, 1998 (pp. 710-28)

Freeman, Jo. The Politics of Women’s Liberation. New York: McKay. (1975)

Freeman, Jo & Johnson, Victoria. Waves of Protest: Social Movements Since the Sixties. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers (1999)

Friedan, Betty. The Feminist Mystique. New York: Dell (1968)

Gamson, William. The Strategy of Social Protest. Homewood: Dorsey Press (1975)

Gamson, William; Modigliani, Andre. "Media Discourse and Public Opinion on Nuclear Power" *American Journal of Sociology* 95, 1989. (pp. 1-37)

Gamson, William; Wolfsfeld, Gadi. "Movements and Media as Interacting Systems". *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 528, 1993 (pp. 114-125)

Garvey, Amy Jacques. "Women as Leaders". Taken From: Taken From: Words of Fire: An Anthology of African-American Feminist Thought ed. Beverly Guy-Sheftall. New York: The New Press (1995)

Garvey, Marcus. "Philosophy and Opinions". Taken from: African Intellectual Heritage: A Book of Sources ed. Molefi K. Asante and Abu S. Abarry. Philadelphia: Temple University Press (1996)

Gilkes-Townsend, Cheryl. If it Wasn't for the Women: Black Women's Experience and Womanist Culture in Church and Community. Maryknoll: Orbis Books (2001)

Gitlin, Todd. The Whole World is Watching. Berkeley: University of California Press. (1980)

Goldstone, Jack. "Comparative Historical Analysis and Knowledge Accumulation in the Study of Revolutions". Taken From: Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences. Ed. Ed Mahoney and Rueschemeyer. New York: Cambridge University Press (2003)

Gosine, Mahine. East Indians & Black Power in the Caribbean: The Case of Trinidad New York: Africana Research Press (1986)

Greene, Linda. "The Black Revolutionary Woman". *The Black Panther* 28 September 1968: 11+

Guy, Jasmine and Shakur, Afeni. Evolution of a Revolutionary. New York: Atria Books (2004)

Hamel, Jacques. Case Study Methods. Qualitative Research Methods Series 32. Newbury Park: Sage Publications (1993)

Hamilton, D.B. "The Idea of History and the History of Ideas". *Image: Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, 25 (1993) pp. 45-48

Harper, Frederick D. "The Influence of Malcolm X on Black Militancy" *Journal of Black Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 4.

Henderson, Errol A. "The Lumpenproletariat as Vanguard?: The Black Panther Party, Social Transformation, and Pearson's Analysis of Huey Newton". *Journal of Black Studies* Vol. 28, No. 2 (Nov. 1997) pp. 171-199

Henry, Imani "I Was a Prisoner of War: Interview with Safiya Bukhari." *Workers World Newspaper* (July 25, 2002)

Hill-Collins, Patricia. Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment. Boston: Unwin Hyman. (1990)

Hole, Judith; Levine, Ellen Rebirth of Feminism. New York: Quadrangle Books. (1971)

hooks, bell. Ain't I a Woman. Boston: South End Press (1981)

hooks, bell. Talking Back: Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black. Boston: South End Press (1989)

Hudson-Weems, Clenora. Africana Womanism: Reclaiming Ourselves. Troy: Bedford Publishers (1995)

Hurtado, Aida. "Common Grounds & Crossroads: Race, Ethnicity, & Class in Women's Lives". *Signs* Vol. 14, No. 4 (Summer 1989) pp. 833-855

Irons, Jenny. "The Shaping of Activist Recruitment and Participation: A Study of Women in the Mississippi Civil Rights Movement". *Gender & Society* 12, 1998 (pp. 692-709)

"I Would Have Joined the March Too, Says Weekes". *Trinidad Express* 3 March 1970: 10+

James, C.L.R.. The Black Jacobins. New York: Vintage Books. (1963)

James, John "Arrested Ten Now Out on Bail: Students Meet at UWI to Discuss Next Move". *Trinidad Express* 1 March 1970: 3+

Janesick, Valerie. "The Dance of Qualitative Research Design: Metaphor, Methodolatry, and Meaning". Taken From: Handbook of Qualitative Research. Edited by Norman K. Denzin & Yvonna S. Lincoln. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications. (1994)

Jennings, Regina. "Poetry of the Black Panther Party: Metaphors of Militancy" *Journal of Black Studies*, Vol 29, No. 1 (September 1998)

Kambon, Khafra. "The Vibrations of 1970". Taken From: The Black Power Revolution 1970: a Retrospective. ed. Selwyn Ryan and Taimoon Stewart. St. Augustine, Trinidad: University of the West Indies (1995)

Kathleen Cleaver Interview. Taken From: "Black Panthers Today", PBS Website "A Panther in Africa" by Aaron Matthews. (2004)
http://www.pbs.org/pov/pov2004/apantherinafrica/special_today_cleaver.html

Kelley, Robin D. G. Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination Boston: Beacon Press (2002)

Kohn, Melvin. "Cross-National Research as an Analytic Strategy". Taken From: Cross-National Research in Sociology ed. Melvin Kohn. Newbury Park: Sage Publications. (1989)

Kokopeli, Bruce; Lakey, George "More Power than We Want: Masculine Sexuality and Violence" Taken From Race, Class, and Gender an Anthology ed. Margaret L. Anderson, Patricia Hill Collins. Wadsworth Thompson: Belmont, CA (2000)

Leedy, P.D. Practical Research: Planning and Design 5th Edition. New York: Mac Millian (1993)

Lincoln, Eric C. Black Muslims in America 3rd ed. Trenton: Africa World Press (1994)

Lindsey, Kay. "The Black Woman as a Woman." Taken From: The Black Woman Anthology ed. Toni Cade. New York: New American Library (1970)

Lorde, Audre. "Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference". Taken From: Words of Fire: An Anthology of African-American Feminist Thought ed. Beverly Guy-Sheftall. New York: The New Press (1995)

Lowenthal, David "Black Power in the Caribbean Context" *Economic Geography* Vol. 48, No.1 Contributions to an Understanding of Black America (Jan., 1972)

Lux, William "Black Power in the Caribbean" *Journal of Black Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 2 (Dec., 1972)

Mahoney, Ed & Rueschemeyer, . Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences. New York: Cambridge University Press (2003)

Marullo, Sean. "Gender Difference in Peace Movement Participation". *Research in Social Movement, Conflict, and Change*. 13, 1991 (pp. 135-52)

Marx Ferree, Myra, and Patricia Yancy Martin. Eds. Feminist Organizations: Harvest of the Women's Movement. Philadelphia: Temple University Press (1995)

Matthews, Tracye A. "'No One Ever Asks What a Man's Role in the Revolution Is': Gender Politics and Leadership in the BPP 1966-1971." Taken From: Sisters in the Struggle: African-American Women in the Civil Rights-Black Power Movement ed. Bettye Collier-Thomas & V.P. Franklin

McAdam, Doug. Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency 1930-1970. Chicago: University of Chicago Press (1982)

McAdam, Doug. Freedom Summer. New York: Oxford University Press. (1988)

McAdam, Doug. "Gender as a Mediator of the Activist Experiences: The Case of Freedom Summer". *American Journal of Sociology*. No. 97, 1992

McAdam, Doug; McCarthy, John D.; Zald, Mayer N. "Introduction: Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures and Framing Processes—Toward a Synthetic, Comparative Perspective on Social Movements" Taken From: Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (1996)

McCarthy, John; Zald, Mayer. Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory". *American Journal of Sociology* 82, 1977 (pp. 212-241)

McCartney, John T. Black Power Ideologies: An Essay in African-American Political Thought. Philadelphia: Temple University Press (1992)

McDonald, Katrina Bell. "Black Activist Mothering: A Historical Intersection of Race, Gender, and Class". *Gender and Society*. Vol. 11, No. 6 (1997) pp. 773-795

McNair Barnett, Bernice. "Invisible Southern Black Women Leaders in the Civil Rights Movement". *Gender & Society*. No. 7, 1993 (pp.162-182)

Meeks, Brian. "The 1970 Revolution: Chronology and Documentation". Taken From: The Black Power Revolution 1970: a Retrospective. ed. Selwyn Ryan and Taimoon Stewart. St. Augustine, Trinidad: University of the West Indies (1995)

Miller, Delbert & Salkind, Neil J. Handbook of Research Design & Social Measurement. Thousand Oaks: Sage (2002)

Millette, James. "Towards the Black Power Revolt of 1970". Taken From: The Black Power Revolution 1970: a Retrospective. ed. Selwyn Ryan and Taimoon Stewart. St. Augustine, Trinidad: University of the West Indies (1995)

Mithun, Jacqueline S. "Black Power and Community Change" *Journal of Black Studies* Vol. 7, No. 3 (Mar., 1977)

Mohammed, Patricia. "The Journey from Laventille to St. Ann's: Towards a Caribbean Feminist Philosophy. 5th Encuentro Feminista de America Latina y el Caribe. Buenos Aires, Argentina (18th-24th November 1990)

Mohammed, Patricia. "Writing Gender into History: The Negotiation of Gender Relations among Indian Men and Women in Post-Indenture Trinidad Society 1917-47".

Taken From Engendering History: Caribbean Perspectives, Visions, & Possibilities ed. Verene Shepherd, Bridget Brereton, Barbara Bailey. Kingston: Tan Randle Publishers (1995)

Mohammed, Patricia. "Towards Indigenous Feminist Theorizing in the Caribbean". *Feminist Review*. Number 59, Summer 1998. (pp. 34-56)

Mohanty, Chandra. "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses". *Feminist Review*. No. 30, Autumn 1988 (pp 61-88)

Molotch, Harvey. "Media and Movements". Taken From: The Dynamics of Social Movements. Ed. Mayer Zaid and John Mc Carthy. Cambridge: Winthrop (1979)

Momsen, Janet. "The Double Paradox". Taken From: Mohammed, Patricia. Gendered Realities: Essays in Caribbean Feminist Thought. Mona: University of West Indies Press (2002)

Morris, Aldon. "Black Southern Sit-In Movement: An Analysis of Internal Organization". *American Sociological Review* 46 1981 (pp. 744-67)

Morris, Aldon. The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities Organizing for Change. New York: Free Press (1984)

Morris, Aldon; Herring, Cedric. "Theory and Research in Social Movements: A Critical Review". *Annual Review of Political Science* 2, 1987 (pp. 137-198)

Morris, Aldon. "Reflections on Social Movement Theory: Criticisms and Proposals". *Contemporary Sociology* Vol. 29, No. 3 May, 2000 (pp. 445-454)

Moses, Wilson Jeremiah. Classical Black Nationalism: From the American Revolution to Marcus Garvey. New York: New York University Press (1996)

Murray, Pauli. "The Liberation of Black Women" Taken From: Words of Fire: An Anthology of African-American Feminist Thought ed. Beverly Guy-Sheftall. New York: The New Press (1995)

Nance, Teresa A. "Hearing the Missing Voice" *Journal of Black Studies* Vol. 26, No. 5 (May 1996)

Nelville, Helen; Hamer, Jennifer. "We Make Freedom: An Exploration of Revolutionary Black Feminism" *Journal of Black Studies* Vol. 31, No. 4 (March 2001)

Ogbar, Jeffrey Ogbonna Green. Black Power: Radical Politics and African-American Identity. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press (2004)

Olesen, V. (1994). Feminisms and Models of Qualitative research. Handbook of Qualitative Research. N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln. Thousand Oaks, Sage.

Oppenheimer, Martin. "Current Negro Protest Activities and the Concept of Social Movement". *Phylon* Vol. 24, No. 2 2nd Quarter 1963 (pp. 154-159)

Osirim, Mary Johnson. "We Toil All the Livelong Day: Women in the English-Speaking Caribbean". Taken From: Daughters of Caliban: Caribbean Women in the 20th Century. Ed. Consuelo Lopez Springfield. Bloomington: Indiana (1997)

Oxaal, Ivar. Race and revolutionary consciousness; a documentary interpretation of the 1970 Black power revolt in Trinidad. Cambridge: Schenkman Publishing (1971)

Panther Sisters on Women's Liberation (1969). Taken From: VanDeburg, William. Modern Black Nationalism From Marcus Garvey to Louis Farrakhan New York: New York University Press. (1997)

Pantin, Raoul, "March to Caroni Incident—Thousands Join 10- Hour Hike". *Trinidad Guardian* 13 March 1970: 13+

Pantin, Raoul & Boisselle, Hollis. "Students Protest the Cathedral" *Trinidad Express* 27 February 1970: 1+

Paravisini-Gebert, Lizabeth. "Decolonizing Feminsim: The Home-Grown Roots of Caribbean Women's Movements". Taken From: Daughters of Caliban: Caribbean Women in the 20th Century. Ed. Consuelo Lopez Springfield. Bloomington: Indiana (1997)

Pasley, Victoria. "Black Power, Gender Ideology, Cultural Change and the Beginnings of Feminist Discourse in Urban Trinidad in the 1970s". Working Paper No. 2. University of West Indies, St. Augustine Center for Gender and Development (2001)

Perkins, Margo V. "Inside Our Dangerous Ranks: The Autobiography of Elaine Brown and the Black Panther Party." Taken From: Still Lifting, Still Climbing: African American Women's Contemporary Activism ed. Kimberly Springer. New York: New York University Press (1999)

Pierson, Paul. "Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics". *American Political Science Review*, 94 (2000a) pp. 251-267

Pierson, Paul. "Not Just What, but *When*: Issues of Timing and Sequence in Political Processes". *Studies in American Political Development*, 14 (2000b) pp. 72-92

Quinn, Michael. Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods Second Edition. Newbury Park: Sage Publications. (1990)

Rainwater, Lee and Yancey, William. The Moynihan Report and the Politics of Controversy; a trans-action social science and public policy report, including the full text of The Negro family: the case for national action by Daniel Patrick Moynihan. Cambridge: M.I.T. Press (1967)

Ray, Raka. "Women's Movements and Political Fields: A Comparison of Two Indian Cities". *Social Problems*. No. 45, 1998. (pp. 21-36)

Riddell, John & Thomas, Tony. Black Power in the Caribbean. New York: Pathfinder Press (1971)

Riviere, Bill. Black Power, NJAC, and the 1970 Confrontation in the Caribbean: An Historical Interpretation. St. Augustine: University of the West Indies; Contribution to University of Pennsylvania Annual Seminar on the Black Man in the Caribbean (1972)

Robinson, Candi. "Message to Revolutionary Women". *The Black Panther* 9 August 1968: 23

Robnett, Belinda. How Long? How Long? African American Women in the Civil Rights Movement. New York: Oxford University Press (1997)

Rochford, E. Burke Jr. Hare Krishna in America. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press. (1985)

Rodney, Walter. Groundings with my Brothers. (1969)

Roth, Benita. "The Making of the Vanguard Center: Black Feminist Emergence in the 1960's & 1970's." Taken From: Still Lifting, Still Climbing: African American Women's Contemporary Activism ed. Kimberly Springer. New York: New York University Press (1995)

Rowley, Michelle. "Reconceptualizing Voice: The Role of Matrifocality in Shaping Theories and Caribbean Voices". Taken From: Mohammed, Patricia. Gendered Realities: Essays in Caribbean Feminist Thought. Mona: University of West Indies Press (2002)

Rueschemeyer, Dietrich & Stephens, John D. "Comparing Historical Sequences—A Powerful Tool for Causal Analysis". *Comparative Social Research*, 17 (1997) pp. 55-72

Rupp, Leila J; Taylor, Verta. Survival in the Doldrums: The American Women's Rights Movement, 1945 to the 1960's. New York: Oxford University Press. (1987)

Ryan, Selwyn. "The Struggle for Black Power in the Caribbean". Taken From: The Black Power Revolution 1970: a Retrospective. ed. Selwyn Ryan and Taimoon Stewart. St. Augustine, Trinidad: University of the West Indies (1995)

Seale, Bobby. Seize the Time: the Story of the Black Panther Party and Huey P. Newton. Black Classic Press: Baltimore (1991)

“Second Power March in Tobago Today”. *Trinidad Guardian* 11 April 1970: 7

Shakur, Assata. Assata: An Autobiography. Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books (1987)

“Shanty Town is a Symbol of Neglect, Leaders Tell Crowd”. *Trinidad Express* 5 March 1970: 13+

Shorey-Bryan, Norma. “The Making of Male-Female Relationships in the Caribbean”. Taken From: Women of the Caribbean. Ed. Pat Ellis. London: Zed Books Ltd. (1986)

Smith, (1999)

Snow, David; Zurcher, Louis Jr.; Ekland-Olson, Sheldon. “Social Networks and Social Movements: A Microstructural Approach to Differential Recruitment”. *American Sociological Review* 45, 1980 (pp. 787-801)

“Soul—This is the Spirit Which is at the Bottom of All this Unrest” *Trinidad Express* 11 April 1970

Springer, Kimberly Living for the Revolution: Black Feminist Organizations 1968-80 Durham: Duke University Press (2005)

Springfield, Consuelo Lopez. Daughters of Caliban: Caribbean Women in the 20th Century. Bloomington: Indiana (1997)

Stake, R.E. “The Case-Study Method in Social Inquiry”. *Educational Researcher*, 7 (1978) pp. 5-8

Staples, Robert. The Black Woman in America: Sex, Marriage, and the Family. Chicago: Nelson Hall Publishers (1973)

Strauss, A. Qualitative Analysis for Social Scientists. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (1987)

Takaki, Ronald. A Different Mirror: A History of Multicultural America. Boston: Little, Brown, & Company. (1993)

“Talking About Black Power” *Black Sound* Vol. 1, No. 2 University of West Indies, St. Augustine: 14 December 1970

Tarrow, Sidney. Power in Movement: Social Movements, Collective Action, and Politics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (1994)

Taylor, Ula. "The Historical Evolution of Black Feminist Theory and Praxis." *Journal of Black Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 2 (Nov., 1998)

Taylor, Ula "Making Waves: The Theory & Practice of Black Feminism" *The Black Scholar*, Vol. 28 (1998)

Taylor, Verta. Rock-a-by Baby: Feminism, Self-Help, and Postpartum Depression. New York: Routledge (1996)

Taylor, Verta. "Gender and Social Movements: Gender Processes in Women's Self-help Movements". *Gender & Society*. 13, 1999 (pp. 8-33)

Taylor, Verta. "Mobilizing for Change in a Social Movement Society" *Contemporary Sociology* Vol. 29, No.1 Jan 2000 (pp. 219-230)

Terborg-Penn, Rosalyn. "Through an African Feminist Theoretical Lens: Viewing Caribbean Women's History Cross-Culturally". Taken From Engendering History: Caribbean Perspectives, Visions, & Possibilities ed. Verene Shepherd, Bridget Brereton, Barbara Bailey. Kingston: Tan Randle Publishers (1995)

"The Black Working Woman". *The Black Woman* Vol. 1, No. 1 (November 1975)

"The Question" *Trinidad Express* 19 December 1970: 12+

Thomas, Bert J. "Caribbean Black Power: From Slogan to Practical Politics" *Journal of Black Studies*, (March 1992)

Tilly, Charles. From Mobilization to Revolution. Reading: Addison-Wesley. (1978)

Tilly, Charles. Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons. New York: Russell Sage Foundation. (1984)

Tong, Rosemarie. Feminist Thought: A Comprehensive Introduction. Boulder: Westview Press (1989)

VanDeburg, William. Modern Black Nationalism From Marcus Garvey to Louis Farrakhan New York: New York University Press. (1997)

Wallace, Michele. Black Macho & the Myth of the Super Woman. New York: The Dial Press. (1978)

Weathers, Mary Ann. "An Argument for Black Women's Liberation as a Revolutionary Force." Taken From: Words of Fire: An Anthology of African-American Feminist Thought ed. Beverly Guy-Sheftall. New York: The New Press (1995)

White, E. Francis. "Africa on My Mind: Gender, Counter Discourse, and African American Nationalism". Taken From: Is It Nation Time?: Contemporary Essays on Black Power and Black Nationalism. Edited by Eddie S. Glaude Jr.

Whittier, Nancy. Feminist Generations: The Persistence of the Radical Women's Movement. Philadelphia: Temple University Press (1995)

Williams, Michael W. "Nkrumahism as an Ideological Embodiment of Leftist Thought Within the African World." *Journal of Black Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (1984)

Woods, Randall Bennett. Quest for Identity: America since 1945. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, (2005)

Yin, R.K. Case Study Research. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications (1984)

Yvonne King Interview. Taken From: "Black Panthers Today", PBS Website "A Panther in Africa" by Aaron Matthews. (2004)
http://www.pbs.org/pov/pov2004/apantherinafrica/special_today_king.html

Zaid, Mayer; Ash, Roberta. "Social Movement Organizations: Growth, Decay, and Change". *Social Forces* 44 (1966): pp. 327-341

CURRICULUM VITAE

EDUCATION:

M.A. Pan-African Studies,

Concentration: Africa and the Diaspora

University of Louisville- Coursework Completed: December 2005

Anticipated Graduation: May 2006 GPA: 4.0, *Dean's Citation*

B.A. Liberal Studies: Critical Legal Studies,

Concentrations: Political Science, Pan-African Studies, Philosophy, & English

University of Louisville- May 2004 GPA: 3.56, *cum laude*

HONORS & ACTIVITIES:

- Martin Luther King Jr. Endowment of Peace Award, full academic scholarship awarded to two entering undergraduate freshmen annually, 2000-2004
- Association of Black Students Unsung Hero Award, 2004
- Ed Lee and Melissa Wade Promoter of Diversity in Debate Award, 2004
- Fulbright Alternate to Trinidad and Tobago, 2004
- Women in Global Studies Scholarship Recipient for Study Abroad in Trinidad and Tobago, 2005
- Overseer's Scholars Study Abroad Scholarship to London & Greece, 2002
- Arizona Debate Institute at Arizona State University Stipend Recipient, 2001-2002
- Phi Eta Sigma Freshman Honors Society, inducted 2001
- Golden Key International Honors Society, inducted 2003
- African-American Recognition Reception Exceptional Academic Performance Award 2001-2002 & 2002-2003
- University-level Truman Scholarship Finalist, 2002
- Dean's List, Fall 2000, Fall 2003, Spring 2004
- Deans Scholar, Spring 2002
- National Communication Association Conference "Women in Debate" Panel Member 2003
- National Conference of Black Studies "Struggles on the Ground: Pan-African Studies at the University of Louisville" Panel Member, presented paper "The Revolution is Coming: Challenging Racism through Debate at the University of Louisville 2005
- Louisville Defender Newspaper Black Expo Panel Member "Music and Violence Forum: To unite the younger generations through education, free speech, and empowerment" 2005
- University of Louisville Public Debate Series Moderator, "Did race and class effect the federal government response to Hurricane Katrina?" 2005

ORGANIZATIONS:

University of Louisville Debate Society, Vice-President 2000-2004

Individual Awards (Varsity Division, unless noted):

- * 1st Place Speaker Cross-Examination Debate Association National Tournament (CEDA), 2004
- * 1st Place Speaker CEDA District Tournament, 2004
- * 1st Place Speaker Pepperdine University, 2002
- * 2nd Place Speaker Miami University, OH Novice Debate Tournament, 2000
- * 3rd Place Speaker Washington University Novice Debate Tournament, 2000
- * 5th Place Speaker Georgia State University, 2003
- * 5th Place Speaker Novice Nationals, Towson State University 2001
- * 8th Place Speaker National Debate Tournament, 2004
- * 9th Place Speaker Baylor University, 2004
- * 9th Place Speaker University of Kentucky, 2003
- * 10th Place Speaker Wake Forest University, 2003
- * 11th Place Speaker Naval Academy, 2003
- * 11th Place Speaker California State University, Fullerton, 2003
- * 17th Place Speaker University of Southern California, 2002
- * 19th Place Speaker Georgia State University, 2001
- * CEDA Academic All-American, 2003

Team Awards (Varsity Division):

- * 1st Place Team CEDA District Tournament, 2004
 - * 2nd Place Team Naval Academy, 2003
 - * 5th Place Team CEDA National Tournament, 2004
 - * 5th Place Team National Debate Tournament, 2004
 - * 5th Place Team University of Kansas Novice Debate Tournament, 2001
 - * 5th Place Team Wake Forest University, 2003
 - * 5th Place Team Baylor University, 2004
 - * 9th Place Team Georgia State University, 2002 & 2003
 - * 9th Place Team University of Kentucky, 2003
 - * 9th Place Team Catholic University, 2001
 - * 9th Place Team Kings College Novice Debate Tournament, 2000
- Overseer's Scholars Development Program (Designed to hone leadership skills and develop well-roundedness through cultural activities, networking with community leaders, and coursework, 2001-2004)
 - Board of Overseers Mentoring Program, paired with Civil Rights Activist Anne Braden 2002-2003
 - Undergraduate Students Helping to Recruit (USHR) Mentor, 2001-2002
 - Pan-African Studies Graduate Student Association, 2004- present
 - University of Louisville Amnesty International, 2002-2004
 - Society of Porter Scholars, 2000-2004

COMMUNITY SERVICE/ VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES:

- Catholic Enrichment Center Tutor, 2001-2002
- Southwest Teenage Pregnancy Program Debate Coach, 2002-2003
- Louisville Urban League Mentor Program, 2002-2003

- New York City IMACT Coalition Institute and Training Initiative instructor, Summer 2004
- University of Louisville, Summer Debate Institute instructor, Summer 2004
- District of Columbia of Urban Debate League High School Camp instructor Summer 2003, 2004

RELEVANT WORK EXPERIENCE:

Pan-African Studies Graduate Teaching Assistant, University of Louisville

8/04 – 5/05 & 8/05- present-

2nd year- Teach intro-level, cultural diversity general education requirement “Survey of American Diversity” class of approximately 40 students. Help with the promotion and generation of publicity for the department’s Trinidad and Tobago study abroad program, as well as, handle correspondence for graduate admissions. Co-ordinate Pan-African Graduate Student Association activities including the production of an organizational pamphlet, Black history month events at Louisville-area community centers, and professional development workshops.

1st year- Organize and archive materials for the prominent author, Black studies scholar, and international political activist, Dr. Jan Carew. Handle incoming and outgoing correspondence, as well as, various photocopying and dictation responsibilities. Helped compile collection of essays and formatted The Rape of Paradise and a short-story collection for publication.

Student Intern, Children’s Defense Fund Summer Freedom School, Presbyterian Community Center (Louisville, KY)

6/05- 7/05-

Attend weeklong training and team-building session in Knoxville, TN at the University of Tennessee and Alex Haley Farm with other Freedom School sites from around the country. Prepare classroom and Integrated Reading Curriculum in accordance with Children’s Defense Fund regulations for a group of 15 entering and current high school students. Participate in administering breakfast and organize morning “Harambee” ceremonies in order to prepare students for the day. Arrange and supervise field trips, speakers, and special activities, as well as, oversee afternoon workshops with students. Approximately one hundred total students attended the 2005 Freedom School in Louisville, KY, featured in the Courier Journal.

Summer School Teacher, Kametic Institute for Magnificent Achievers (Washington, D.C.)

7/04-8/04 05- 7/05 –

Plan curriculum, devise methods of evaluation, and obtain educational materials such as readings and videos for a 6-week “Intro to Public Speaking” course of 20 high-school aged students, from all different grade levels. Served as a personal mentor and supervisor to inner-city students attending classes through a partnership between the charter school and Department of Employment.

Joint Internship, Community Resource Network of Louisville and National Organization of Research at the University of Chicago

1/04- 5/04-

Serve as field interviewer for the Making Connections Initiative of Louisville. Self-directed position requiring weekly-mailings and conference calls to field manager. Complete 45 minute one-on-one interviews with residents of four disadvantaged Louisville neighborhoods about community concerns including issues of policing, available services, and education. As a Community Resource Network intern, I completed a research paper on juvenile disproportionate minority confinement in the Making Connections neighborhoods by focusing on issues of

reading-levels, family structures, and poverty.

Office Assistant, University of Louisville Debate Society

8/03- 5/04-

Research, design, and solicit advertisements for the Cross-Examination Debate Association National Tournament booklet distributed among five hundred participants from across the country. Plan and implement curriculum, as well as, organize debate workshops for approximately twelve participating Jefferson County Debate League high-schools. Make arrangements and implement filing system for the University of Louisville Debate Society's travel schedule including hotel accommodations, van rentals, and tournament registration.

Student Researcher, Undergraduate Student Research Opportunity

5/03- 8/03-

10 week research position conducting self-directed literature review with the chairs of the Pan-African Studies and Philosophy Departments serving as mentors. The research focused on a combination of religious philosophy and Egyptian history. Presented paper, "Osiris: A Genealogy of the Immortal Soul," and research outcomes at two separate forums attended by faculty and student program participants.